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PART XVI.

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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS OF PERSIA.

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October to December 1908.

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150	Sir G. Barclay ..	360 Tel.	5,	Situation in Tabreez. Refers to No. 149. Mr. Stevens means that strong telegram should be addressed to men of late Shuja Nizam. M. Hartwig has made inquiries about Mr. Wratislaw. Latter should by now be well on his way to Tabreez ..	90
151	" "	361 Tel.	5,	Situation in Tabreez. Russian Consul-General agrees that there is no danger to foreigners, and admits that caravans are now passing between Julfa and Tabreez ..	90
152	To Sir A. Nicolson ..	578 Tel.	5,	Russian officers in Tehran. Shows disadvantages of proposing to Russia that they should be withdrawn ..	90
153	India Office ..	..	4,	Sirri oxide. Policy to be pursued: (i) industry to be kept in British hands (ii) Hormuz Concession to be prevented from being worked to detriment of British interests ..	90
154	Sir A. Nicolson ..	243 Tel.	6,	Russian officers. Refers to No. 152. To suggest withdrawal of, would be a very delicate matter. Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs might be cautiously approached if identic Memorandum produces no result ..	91
155	To Sir A. Nicolson ..	581 Tel.	6,	Joint communication to Shah. Approves action suggested in No. 154. Comments on importance of Russian course of action ..	91
156	Memoranda by Mr. Wilson Fox (Board of Trade)	..	7,	Hormuz Oxide Concessions. Reports conversations with Mr. Strick and Mr. Ellinger concerning ..	92
157	India Office ..	..	4,	Governorship of Kain. Refers to No. 111. Secretary of State for India concurs in proposal of Sir E. Grey to take no further action to oppose appointment of Hashmat-ul-Mulk. Transmits telegram to Government of India ..	95
158	Sir G. Barclay ..	363 Tel.	7,	Hormuz Oxide. Moin states that Persian Legation in London are attempting to sell his Concession on Hormuz to certain Englishmen. Ellinger might be asked if he knows anything of it ..	96
159	" "	364 Tel.	7,	Guards for Oil Syndicate. Refers to Nos. 116 and 148. Lorimer is of opinion that guard should be retained. Mr. D'Arcy should be able to judge whether this course is the right one ..	96
160	" "	365 Tel.	7,	Julfa-Tabreez Road. Refers to No. 146. Has received reply of Shah to representations in regard to holding up of ..	96

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	SUBJECT.	Page
161	Sir A. Nicolson ..	247 Tel.	Nov. 8, 1908	Abrogation of Constitution. Refers to No. 161. Will sound M. Isvolsky as to withdrawal of Russian officers as sign of Russian Government's displeasure ..	96
162	Sir G. Barclay ..	366 Tel.	8,	Demonstration against Constitution. Reports holding of, on the 7th November, at Baghi-Shah. Signature of petition. Most of petitioners only signed through fear of consequences. German Minister fears bast at his Legation ..	97
163	" "	367 Tel.	8,	Shah and Constitution. Refers to No. 141. Has handed, with M. de Hartwig, identic Memorandum to Minister for Foreign Affairs ..	97
164	Sir A. Nicolson ..	483	Oct. 30,	"Times" correspondent in Persia. Reports interview with Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs on subject of ..	97
165	" "	487	31,	Tabreez. Reports interview with M. Isvolsky, and latter's information of disturbed and dangerous state of town ..	98
166	" "	492	Nov. 1,	Tabreez. Transmits copies of documents received from M. Isvolsky concerning identic Memorandum ..	98
167	" "	494	2,	Tabreez. Refers to No. 128. Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs professed himself unwilling to move troops unless absolutely necessary ..	100
168	" "	499	3,	"Times" correspondent in Tehran. Reports conversation with Emperor concerning ..	100
169	Count de Salis ..	240 Commercial	3,	German trade in Persia. Gives substance of article by Dr. Grothe in "Cologne Gazette" recommending that Germany should take greater interest in Persia ..	101
170	Sir A. Nicolson ..	249 Tel.	9,	Constitution. Refers to No. 161. Reports conversation with M. Isvolsky; he suggested to Minister for Foreign Affairs withdrawal of Russian officers, but did not press the matter ..	102
171	To Sir A. Nicolson ..	589 Tel.	9,	Russian officers. If withdrawn it would have to be made clear that they would not be replaced by troops of another nationality ..	102
172	To Sir G. Barclay ..	316 Tel.	9,	Persian Constitution. Instructions with regard to No. 162 ..	103
173	Sir G. Barclay ..	369 Tel.	10,	Bast in His Majesty's Legation. Refers to No. 172. No indication of. Fears of German Minister reported in No. 162 not realized so far ..	103
174	" "	370 Tel.	10,	Shah and Constitution. Refers to No. 163. Shah will receive British and Russian Representatives on the 12th instant ..	103
175	To India Office ..	..	10,	Concessions in Persian Gulf. Refers to No. 153. Transmits copy of telegram from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran and draft of proposed reply ..	103
176	India Office ..	..	10,	Pasand Khan incident. Transmits copy of telegraphic correspondence with Government of India on subject of. Agrees with Sir E. Grey that matter may be dropped ..	103



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177	To Sir G. Barclay ..	317 Tel.	Nov. 11, 1908	Shah and Constitution. Refers to No. 174. Approves his action, and points out that Shah should carry out his promises in interests of himself and his country ..	104
178	India Office ..	..	11,	Political situation in Persian Gulf. Transmits telegram from Viceroy, dated the 9th October, containing views of Government of India on suggestions made by His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire regarding. Viscount Morley concurs in views of Government of India. Notes observations ..	104
179	Treasury ..	..	11,	Military Attaché for Consulate-General at Meshed. Refers to No. 129. Agrees with suggestion that Imperial and Indian Treasuries should divide expense for ..	106
180	Sir A. Nicolson ..	251 Tel. Confidential	12,	Shah and Constitution. M. Isvolsky informs him that M. de Hartwig has been recalled to St. Petersburg for purposes of consultation ..	106
181	Sir G. Barclay ..	371 Tel.	12,	Situation at Tabreez. His Majesty's Consul-General reports public rejoicing at murder of Chief of Maku. Movements of cavalry ..	107
182	" ..	372 Tel.	12,	Shah and Constitution. Has made representations, in conjunction with Mr. Marling, in sense of No. 177. Shah's reply ..	107
183	Consul McDouall ..	1 Treaty	Oct. 24,	Dutch Consul. Appointment of ..	107
184	India Office ..	..	Nov. 14,	Hormuz Oxide Concession. Refers to No. 175. Concurs in terms of telegram which Sir E. Grey proposes to send to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran in reply to Nos. 68 and 158 ..	108
185	Imperial Bank of Persia ..	..	13,	Customs. Transmits copy of telegram received from Tehran ..	108
186	Sir A. Nicolson ..	253 Tel.	14,	Shah and Constitution. Reports conversation with M. Isvolsky with regard to question of what steps the two Governments should take ..	108
187	Sir G. Barclay ..	373 Tel.	14,	Reported German officers. Russian Consul-General at Tabreez has answered in affirmative. M. de Hartwig inquires as to. Mr. Wratislaw reports that they are in Tabreez for business purposes ..	109
188	" ..	374 Tel.	14,	Telegraph exchange. Has informed M. de Hartwig, who proposed renewal of negotiations, that in view of Ahwaz-Borasjun negotiations it was desirable to delay ..	109
189	" ..	375 Tel.	14,	M. de Hartwig's departure. Announces his departure for St. Petersburg "on official business" on the 15th November; M. de Sabline to take charge ..	109
190	" ..	376 Tel.	14,	Turco-Persian frontier. Refers to No. 225. Has received Persian Government's reply to identic note. It announces certain reductions, though no evacuations, and further encroachments ..	109
191	" ..	377 Tel.	14,	Anarchy. His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez announces that village of Mushambar has been pillaged and district ravaged by Karadaghi horsemen ..	110

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193	" ..	379 Tel.	15,	Situation at Tabreez. Refers to No. 191. Further details from His Majesty's Consul-General of attack on Mushamba. Reported that Governor-General has been joined by 800 Persian Cossacks ..	110
194	" ..	380 Tel.	15,	Shah and Constitution. Refers to No. 180. Small prospect of gaining anything by new "Assembly" if it is to be similar to the last. Has made it clear to Shah that no particular form of Assembly would be prescribed ..	110
195	Consul Stevens ..	11	6,	Russian troops. Denies movements of troops reported in British and continental papers ..	111
196	Sir G. Barclay ..	381 Tel.	16,	Shah and Constitution. Nationalists have held meetings since demonstration of 7th November. Petition against demonstration presented to Legations ..	111
197	To Sir G. Barclay ..	319 Tel.	16,	Hormuz oxide and Sirri oxide. Refers to No. 158. To tell Moin that only communications addressed by Messrs. Strick to Persian Government refer to Sirri. Approves modification suggested in No. 68, with points mentioned in No. 546, Part XV. Desirable that Moin should arrange terms with Messrs. Strick ..	111
198	" ..	202	16,	Attack on members of escort of His Majesty's Consul at Seistan. Refers to No. 578, Part XV. Concurs in Mr. Marling's suggestion that note from Persian Government of 30th August should be accepted and matter allowed to drop ..	112
199	India Office ..	..	16,	Bunder Abbas Consulate guard. Transmits copy of despatch to Government of India relative to ..	112
200	Sir G. Barclay ..	383 Tel.	17,	Shah and Constitution. Refers to No. 186. Deprecates elaboration in Russia of reforms to be pressed on the Shah. Suggests urging framing of electoral laws without specifying form of Constitution ..	113
201	" ..	Telegraphic	18,	Shah and Constitution. Refers to No. 200. Necessity of bringing Shah to see that Russia is equally in earnest with His Majesty's Government with regard to question of Constitution. Proposal of threat to withdraw Russian officers ..	113
202	" ..	384 Tel.	18,	Appointment of Persian Minister in London. Persian Government have asked whether Mushir-ul-Mulk would be acceptable as Minister-Resident. Such a proposal must be regarded as temporary expedient only ..	113
203	" ..	385 Tel.	18,	Situation in Tabreez. His Majesty's Consul-General states that he believes Russian Consul-General sends alarmist reports so as to bring about Russian occupation. Russian troops at Julfa ..	113
204	To Sir G. Barclay ..	322 Tel.	18,	Shah and Constitution. Refers to No. 186. Suggests forcing the Shah to grant a Constitution by seizure of Northern and Southern frontier customs ..	114



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206	" " ..	26 Commercial	18,	Guts monopoly. Transmits letter from Mr. H. T. Stevens requesting intervention of His Majesty's Legation with a view to obtaining leave to export ..	114
207	To Mr. C. Stevens ..	..	18,	Claims against Persian Government. Concession on Lake Urumia. Sheep's casings monopoly. Guts export. Taxes on silkworm eggs. Answers inquiries in No. 121, with regard to ..	115
208	Mr. Marling ..	..	18,	Shah. Transmits Memorandum on No. 186. Suggests means of ending present unrest. Shah is great obstacle to good government of Persia ..	115
209	Mr. C. Stevens ..	..	19,	Claims for taxes on silkworm eggs, and losses owing to recent disturbances in Persia. Sheep casings' monopoly, and management of Urumia Lake Concession. Refers to No. 207. Expresses satisfaction at replies to first, but regret at replies to second and third ..	116
210	Mr. Ellinger ..	..	18,	Hormuz. Moin has informed him that a British firm is negotiating with Persian Legation for purchase of Concession. Presumes His Majesty's Government will support no other firm but his own ..	117
211	Sir G. Barclay ..	386 Tel.	19,	Shah and Constitution. Minister for Foreign Affairs has informed him of Shah's intention of instituting a Council. Considers this unsatisfactory. Proposes a joint interview of two dragomans with His Majesty ..	117
212	" " ..	387 Tel.	19,	Retention of guard for Oil Syndicate. Refers to No. 159. Wilson in favour of, and thinks final decision should be postponed for a few weeks ..	117
213	" " ..	388 Tel.	19,	Shah and Constitution. Refers to No. 204. Quotes language used at joint audience with Shah, in view of which proposed threat may not be necessary until representations proposed in No. 211 have been made ..	118
214	To Sir G. Barclay ..	323 Tel.	19,	Persian Representative in London. Informs him that His Majesty's Government's approval of appointment of Mushir-ul-Mulk is conditional upon its being only temporary ..	118
215	India Office ..	..	18,	Oil guard. Transmits copy of letter from Government of India with reference to increase of salary for Lieutenants Wilson and Ranking ..	118
216	Sir A. Nicolson ..	263 Tel.	20,	Satar Khan. Refers to No. 217. Press report that Satar Khan had been decorated by Turkish Government has been denied ..	120
217	Sir G. Barclay ..	339 Tel.	20,	Situation at Tabreez. Refers to Nos. 187 and 203. Russian Consul-General reports that Satar Khan has been decorated by Turkish Government. Medal really of no importance ..	121

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219	To Mr. C. Stevens ..	..	20,	Claims against Persian Government. His Majesty's Government regret that they cannot modify decision conveyed to him in No. 207 ..	121
220	Sir G. Barclay ..	390 Tel.	21,	Situation in Azerbaijan. His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez reports that Nationalists occupied Maraga on 16th instant, and Acting Governor fled. Re-establishment of Anjuman at Dilwan ..	121
221	To Sir G. Barclay ..	324 Tel.	21,	Exchange of telegraph lines. Refers to No. 188. Approves action, subject to provision that negotiations with regard to Ahwaz-Borasjun line are not prolonged for an indefinite period ..	122
222	Sir A. Nicolson ..	265 Tel.	22,	Shah and Constitution. Refers to No. 218. Russian Representative at Tehran has been instructed to act in sense of Sir G. Barclay's suggestion ..	122
223	Sir G. Barclay ..	391 Tel.	22,	Shah and Constitution. Is informed by Grand Vizier that Shah has sent Rescript to be printed, declaring he will not grant an Assembly which is contrary to Islam. Is preparing joint Memorandum with Russian colleague ..	122
224	" " ..	392 Tel.	22,	Shah and Constitution. Refers to No. 223. Shah's Rescript has appeared stating that His Majesty has abandoned idea of convoking a Parliament. Suggests menaces, necessity of which is recognized by Russian Legation ..	122
225	" " ..	280	Oct. 18,	Identical note presented by England and Russia to Persian Government. Refers to No. 6. Transmits English version of. Delay in presentation of communication ..	123
226	" " ..	281	19,	German trade in South-West Persia. Acknowledges No. 527. Part XV. Persian Government are precluded from granting concessions to any person except in certain provinces by terms of concession granted to Mr. D'Arcy in 1901 ..	123
227	" " ..	282	19,	Messrs. Lynch's claim. Transmits correspondence between His Majesty's Legation and Persian Government concerning. Proposed to drop the subject temporarily ..	124
228	" " ..	284	20,	Withdrawal of Turkish troops from neighbourhood of Urumia. Transmits report from Consul-General Wratislaw on ..	125
229	" " ..	285	22,	Arrears due to Army, Diplomatic, Consular officers, &c. Refers to No. 398. M. Bizot has been handed itemized statement of by Grand Vizier. Amounts to over 500,000l. ..	126
230	" " ..	286	26,	Governorship of Kain. Steps taken by Mr. Marling in support of Shaukat (see Nos. 93 and 590). Has not succeeded in obtaining re-establishment of Shaukat. Objections to Hashmat-ul-Mulk ..	127

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233	" "	289	4,	Opening of communications from Ahwaz northward. Refers to Nos. 405 and 579, Part XV. Transmits copy of letter from Major Cox urging necessity of. Comments on .. ..	133
234	" "	290	4,	Gulahek. Suggests modifications in King's Regulations regarding landed property in .. ..	136
235	" "	293	5,	Transfer of Imperial Bank's lien. Refers to No. 608. Minister of Finance has refused his sanction to. Transmits copy of note addressed to Persian Government at request of Mr. Wood, Chief Manager of the Bank .. ..	138
236	" "	294 Confidential	5,	Nationalists at Tabreez. Refers to No. 92. Relations between Governor-General of Tabreez and Nationalists. Attack by latter on Governor-General's camp on 9th October. Surrender of Davachi quarter of the town on the 12th .. ..	139
237	" "	295 Secret	6,	Meshed. Transmits diaries of Military Attaché from 15th September to 17th October .. ..	140
238	Sir A. Nicolson	513	9,	Intention of Shah to abrogate Constitution. Refers to No. 162. Reports interview with Minister for Foreign Affairs on. Latter's views on subject of withdrawal of Russian officers .. ..	147
239	" "	515	12,	Persian finance. Refers to No. 22. Has communicated to Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs summary of No. 584, Part XV, concerning. Gives M. Isvolsky's views concerning .. ..	148
240	" "	518	12,	Shah. M. Isvolsky considered outlook very hopeless. M. de Hartwig was coming to St. Petersburg for consultation on the subject .. ..	148
241	" "	520	14,	Shah and Constitution. Reports conversation with M. Isvolsky concerning. Latter very uneasy. Had decided on non-intervention and no support to the Shah .. ..	149
242	" "	526	18,	Protection of Russian interests in Azerbaijan. Reports interview with M. Isvolsky, who is anxious for, and quotes "Novoe Vremya" and "Bourse Gazette" .. ..	150
243	Messrs. Ellinger and Co.	..	20,	Hormuz oxide. Transmits copy of letter to Mr. Wilson Fox with regard to negotiations with Mr. Strick .. ..	151
244	Sir A. Nicolson	268 Tel.	23,	Shah's Rescript. Reports conversation with M. Isvolsky, who deprecated proposed threat .. ..	152

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246	" "	394 Tel.	23,	Shah and Constitution. Refers to No. 224. Russian Minister's opinion of probable effect of threat. Demands proposed to be made at joint audience of British and Russian Ministers .. ..	152
247	" "	395 Tel.	23,	Situation at Tabreez. His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez reports that Nationalists have captured Marend, and according to Russian accounts have pillaged road station in the Derediz .. ..	153
248	To Sir G. Barclay	325 Tel.	23,	Shah's Rescript. Refers to No. 223. Approves action .. ..	153
249	To Sir A. Nicolson	616 Tel.	23,	Abolition of Constitution by the Shah. Possibility of putting pressure on Shah. Colonel Liakhoff might be replaced. But thing would be to allow Nationalists to exercise pressure on Shah, and communication might be made to Satar Khan. Best to abstain from intervention .. ..	153
250	Memorandum communicated by Count Benckendorff	..	24,	German officers in Tabreez. Gives list of, as reported as being in Tabreez..	154
251	War Office	..	23,	Russian officers. There are five officers with Persian Cossack Brigade; two more are probably to be reported .. ..	154
252	Sir A. Nicolson	269 Tel.	24,	Situation in Azerbaijan. Refers to No. 219. Has communicated to M. Isvolsky proposed representations to Shah and Satar Khan. Gives M. Isvolsky's views on them .. ..	155
253	Sir G. Barclay	396 Tel.	24,	Retention of oil guard. Refers to No. 212. Wilson is supported by local Manager of Oil Syndicate in his opinion, and that it is undesirable to withdraw guard at present .. ..	155
254	" "	397 Tel.	24,	Attacks by Rahim Khan on Armenian villages. Mr. Wratislaw has announced impending renewal of attack on Mushamba; two Representatives are pressing Shah to order Rahim Khan to desist .. ..	156
255	" "	398 Tel.	23,	Shah and Constitution. Shah was intimidated by representation of the 22nd November, and has ordered suppression of Rescript. Two representatives are asking for an audience for the two dragomans with the Shah .. ..	156
256	" "	399 Tel.	24,	Occupation of Binab by Nationalists. His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez has announced .. ..	156
257	Consul Stevens	Telegraphic	24,	Concentration of Russian troops at Julfa. Details .. ..	156
258	Memorandum communicated to Count Benckendorff	..	24,	Abolition of Constitution by the Shah. His Majesty's Government reluctant to carry out threat of seizing customs-houses. Best course would be to let Nationalists exert pressure on Shah .. ..	156
259	To India Office	..	24,	Red oxide in Sirri. Transmits No. 245 respecting views of Moin with regard to. Asks views of Secretary of State for India .. ..	157



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260	To Board of Trade ..	Confidential	Nov. 24, 1908	Red Oxide in Persian Gulf. Moin has claimed that Sirri is included in his Concession under the Firman of 1904. Best course would be to hold back note to Persian Government regarding necessity of approval of His Majesty's Government of grant of Concessions in Sirri as likely to be interpreted by Moin as hostile move and thus lessen chances of Messrs. Strick coming to terms with him regarding Hormuz .. .. .	157
261	Sir G. Barclay ..	400 Tel.	25,	Joint representations against abolition of Constitution. Reports interview with Minister for Foreign Affairs. Shah's annoyance at passage referring to evil counsels of his entourage. Explanation given of Rescript. Audience of two dragomans .. .. .	158
262	To Mr. M. Ellinger ..	..	25,	Red oxide in Hormuz. Acknowledges No. 210. Replies in affirmative ..	159
263	To Sir G. Barclay ..	331 Tel.	26,	German officers. Refers to No. 217. Information has been received from Russian Government respecting. Is stated that Satar Khan receiving assistance from them. Mr. Wratislaw should telegraph details .. .. .	159
264	Sir A. Nicolson ..	274 Tel.	27,	Situation in Azerbaijan. Reports interview with M. Isvolsky on. Latter attributes bad state of affairs to Young Turk Committee, and expressed wish that His Majesty's Government should obtain declaration from Committee of Union and Progress to effect that they will not intervene in affairs of Persia. Communication to Satar Khan proposed in No. 249 ..	159
265	Sir G. Barclay ..	401 Tel.	27,	Germans at Tabreez. Refers to No. 263. Gives substance of Mr. Wratislaw's telegram on which No. 187 was based. Instructions in sense of No. 263 have been sent to Mr. Wratislaw .. ..	160
266	" ..	402 Tel.	27,	Persian Special Envoy to St. Petersburg. Ala-ul-Mulk about to leave for St. Petersburg. Will afterwards proceed to Berlin. M. Sabline has similar information ..	160
267	To Sir A. Nicolson ..	389	27,	Persian affairs. Has given Count Benckendorff copy of report of answers made in House of Commons, 26th November regarding. Count Benckendorff concurred in opinion that there was nothing that could create difficulties for Russian Government .. ..	160
268	To Sir C. MacDonald	293	27,	Persian Affairs. Report conversation with Japanese Chargé d'Affaires on Russian attitude, and relations of His Majesty's Government to Russian Government, with regard to .. .. .	161
269	To India Office ..	..	27,	Increase of pay of officers of Ahwaz Consular Guard. Acknowledges No. 215. Inadvisable to approach Treasury on the subject until it is decided how long guard is to be retained .. .. .	161
270	Sir A. Nicolson ..	277 Tel.	28,	Young Turk Committee and Nationalists in Tabreez. M. Isvolsky has made protest to Turkish Ambassador. Suggestion that latter should obtain sort of assurance from Young Turk Committee .. ..	161

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271	Sir G. Barclay ..	403 Tel.	Nov. 28, 1908	Germans at Tabreez. Refers to No. 263. His Majesty's Consul-General asks for details concerning, which have been furnished to Foreign Office by Russian Government so that he may be able to check them (see No. 265) .. ..	162
272	" ..	404 Tel.	28,	Shah and Constitution. Undesirable to make further joint representations at present. Result of audience of two dragomans. Council to meet. This Council might be used as step towards Medjliss .. ..	162
273	Sir G. Lowther ..	779	17,	Non-evacuation by Turkish troops of places on Persian side of frontier. Transmits copy of note addressed by Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs to Ottoman Government concerning .. ..	162
274	Sir G. Barclay ..	405 Tel.	30,	Persian Special Envoy to St. Petersburg. Refers to No. 266. M. Sabline has been informed by his Government that the Emperor declines all manifestations of sympathy, and has been instructed to communicate this to Persian Government..	164
275	" ..	406 Tel.	30,	Shah and Constitution. Has received reply of Persian Government to joint note of 22nd November. Gives substance of ..	164
276	" ..	407 Tel.	30,	Protection of Bahrain subjects. Has received from Minister for Foreign Affairs draft of amended note. Quotes only objectionable passage. Inquires if he may accept note with or without omission of this passage .. ..	164
277	To Sir A. Nicolson ..	629 Tel.	30,	Shah and Constitution. Instructs him to inquire whether M. Isvolsky agrees that Shah should be requested to draft a new Electoral Law .. ..	165
278	To Sir G. Lowther ..	467 Tel.	30,	Young Turks. Refers to No. 264. Inquires whether it is possible to suggest to the Young Turks that they should declare that they will support the policy of non-intervention .. ..	165
279	To Sir G. Barclay ..	334 Tel.	30,	German officers. Refers to Nos. 265 and 271. Gives reports on which Russian suspicions are based .. ..	165
280	Memorandum communicated to Count Benckendorff	..	30,	German officers in Tabreez. Refers to No. 263. Transmits Sir G. Barclay's information concerning .. ..	166
281	Sir A. Nicolson ..	280 Tel.	Dec. 1,	Shah and Constitution. Refers to No. 277. Proceedings of projected Council have already begun. Preparation of Electoral Law to be their first occupation. Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs thus thinks further representations to Shah unnecessary at present .. ..	166
282	" ..	281 Tel.	1,	Situation in Tabreez. Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs has informed M. Isvolsky that medals sent to Tabreez had been dispatched by Persian sympathizers with Sattar Khan's movement resident in Constantinople. Turkish Government disclaim any desire to interfere .. ..	166

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283	Sir G. Lowther ..	409 Tel.	Dec. 1, 1908	Young Turks and Persian Nationalists in Azerbaijan. Tewfik Pasha has warned authorities on frontier in Vilayet of Van and Turkish Consul at Tabreez not to intervene in Persia. Cannot obtain declaration from Committee of Union and Progress, which is an occult body ..	167
284	Sir G. Barclay ..	408 Tel.	1,	Shah and Constitution. Refers to No. 264. Comments on members of new Council of Notables. Only way of bringing Shah to reason is that suggested in No. 246. Gravity of situation in Tabreez. ..	167
285	" ..	409 Tel.	1,	Situation at Tabreez. Transmits telegram No. 76 from His Majesty's Consul-General, reporting return of Nationalist troops from Maraga and imprisonment of two leaders for misconduct ..	168
286	" ..	410 Tel.	1,	Situation at Tabreez. Transmits telegram from His Majesty's Consul-General, reporting that Nationalist troops have been driven out of Maraga ..	168
287	" ..	411 Tel.	1,	Shah and Constitution. Refers to No. 261. Rescript has been posted all over the town, in spite of assurances given by Minister for Foreign Affairs. Is acting with Russian colleague in pressing for immediate withdrawal ..	168
288	" ..	412 Tel.	1,	Situation in Tehran. Secret societies are at work and effervescence increasing. Petition in favour of Constitution presented to Legations ..	168
288*	" ..	Telegraphic	1,	Tabreez. Refers to No. 284. Russian revolutionaries at ..	168*
289	To India Office ..	..	1,	Political situation in Persian Gulf. Acknowledges No. 178, and concurs in suggestions made by His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire in his despatch of the 6th June as to visit of Major Cox to Tehran, British and Russian Consular establishments, appointment of British Vice-Consul at Lingah, policing trade routes, customs, naval arrangements in Gulf ..	168
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380	Sir G. Barclay ..	443 Tel.	19,	Seizure by Ain-ed-Dowleh of bank's property near Tabreez. Refers to No. 373. Has made energetic protest to Persian Government. Grand Vizier has promised that money will be repaid by 24th December ..	205
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424	Sir A. Nicolson ..	313 Tel.	26,	Zil-es-Sultan. Reports interview with Minister for Foreign Affairs to effect that British and Russian Governments prefer that he should not return at present ..	249
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426	" ..	453 Tel.	26,	Situation in Azerbaijan. Nationalists have been worsted near Maraga. Satar Khan is alleged to have received what purports to be declaration from Turkish Commander on the frontier promising support to Nationalists ..	250
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428	To Sir A. Nicolson ..	675 Tel.	26,	Protection of Shah. Refers to No. 413. Guarantee should follow lines of formula suggested in No. 412, and should not be put in writing. Family might be included if Russian Government wish ..	251
429	Sir A. Nicolson ..	316 Tel.	27,	Shah and Constitution. M. Isvolsky will, in a few days, give detailed exposition of proposals he has to make ..	251
430	Sir G. Barclay ..	456 Tel.	27,	Nationalists at Resht. Turkish Chargé d'Affaires reports that Nationalists have taken refuge in Turkish Consular Agency at Resht ..	251

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433	Sir G. Barclay ..	457 Tel.	28,	Bushire customs. Refers to No. 341. Reply of Persian Government to representations. Not clear whether payments secured on receipts of Bushire customs. Asks leave to accept Arrangement on undertaking being given that payments are made from Bushire receipts .. ..	252
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435	To Sir F. Bertie ..	307 Tel.	28,	Zil-es-Sultan. Refers to No. 424. Concurs in M. Isvolsky's proposal. To act accordingly .. ..	253
436	To Sir G. Lowther ..	488 Tel.	28,	Bast at Turkish Embassy in Tehran. His Majesty's Government have received communication from Russian Government asking that British Representative should join with Russian in pointing out to Porte undesirability of .. ..	253
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438	Sir G. Barclay ..	459 Tel.	29,	Situation in Tehran. Reports town quiet and some bazaars open .. ..	253
439	To Sir G. Lowther ..	534	29,	Affairs in Azerbaijan. Refers to No. 352. His Majesty's Government hope that intervention by any Power will be avoided. Advisable, therefore, to deprecate Turkish intervention .. ..	254
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441	Mr. D'Arcy ..	..	28,	Persian oil-fields. Represent cost to which they have been put by stoppage of work, and beg His Majesty's Government to maintain guard at public cost .. ..	254
442	Sir G. Barclay ..	460 Tel.	30,	Situation in Tehran. Opening of bazaars .. ..	255
443	To Sir G. Barclay ..	371 Tel.	30,	Seizure of bank's remittances by Ain-ed-Dowleh. Refers to No. 427. Intervention of His Majesty's Minister required for recovery of a further sum seized in October .. ..	256

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	SUBJECT.	Page
444	To Sir T. Jackson ..	..	Dec. 30, 1908	Bank and Bushire customs. Refers to No. 433. Transmits telegram received from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran to effect that from December to March 1909 Customs Administration will pay 13,000 tomans per month, and 30,000 tomans per month thereafter. Comments on, and asks views of Board .. ..	256
445	To Imperial Bank of Persia ..	..	30,	Ain-ed-Dowleh. Informs of No. 443. Money not yet refunded. Proposal to demand attachment of Ain-ed-Dowleh's house in Tehran .. ..	256
446	India Office ..	..	30,	Consulate at Ahwaz. Transmits telegram to Viceroy, dated 23rd December, relative to proposed appointment of Lieutenant Ranking to .. ..	257
447	Imperial Bank of Persia ..	..	30,	Branch at Nasratabad in Seistan. Refers to No. 445. Transmits statement of accounts for financial year ended 20th September ..	257
448	Sir G. Lowther ..	429 Tel.	31,	Bast in Turkish Legation. Russian colleague does not favour identic representation to Grand Vizier very warmly. Not disposed to include reference to assurance proposed in No. 436. Porte declares bastis are evacuating Ottoman Embassy .. ..	258
449	Sir G. Barclay ..	461 Tel.	31,	Transfer of lien of Imperial Bank from Kermanshah to Bushire Customs. Refers to No. 433. Monthly instalment of 30,000 tomans is to constitute payment in respect of interest on the entire debt. Recommends acceptance in event of securing assignment of Bushire customs .. ..	258
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## ERRATUM.

Page 148, No. 240. The dispatch and receipt dates should read "November."



CONFIDENTIAL.

## Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Persia.

### PART XVI.

[33989]

No. 1.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 1.)*

Sir,

*India Office, September 30, 1908.*

WITH reference to your letter dated the 10th June last, relative to the operations of the Oil Concessions Syndicate in the neighbourhood of Ahwaz, I am directed by Viscount Morley to transmit herewith, to be laid before the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy on the subject. Papers received by mail from the Government of India on the 28th instant are also inclosed.

Lord Morley would be glad to be favoured with Sir E. Grey's views as to the further period during which the Indian guard should be retained for the protection of the Syndicate's works. Should their retention during next hot weather be deemed necessary, the question of housing the contingent will arise, and Lord Morley would be glad to learn whether, in that case, Sir E. Grey considers that the Syndicate might reasonably be asked to bear the cost of providing the requisite accommodation, which is estimated at 1,500 rupees (100l.).

I am, &c.

(Signed)

COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

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Inclosure 1 in No. 1.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*September 27, 1908.*

YOUR telegram dated the 22nd November, 1907. Oil Syndicate camps, Ahwaz. Application has reached us for sanction to expenditure of 1,500 rupees on constructing quarters for guards on Oil Syndicate's works. If detachment is to be retained during next hot weather it will be necessary to provide them with accommodation. We shall be glad to be informed by telegraph as to further period for which it is contemplated that guards should be retained, as building season, which lasts four months only, has begun. The following telegram, dated the 22nd instant, contains the views of the Resident, Persian Gulf:—

“Oil Syndicate. Your telegram of the 17th instant.

“It appears from recent reports from the scene of operations that pipes have arrived, tanks installed, and contracts of European staff renewed. Lorimer, whom I have consulted, recommends that provision for retaining guard throughout next hot weather should be made. I think it would be advisable that details of programme which Directors of Syndicate contemplate during coming year should be ascertained.”

## Inclosure 2 in No. 1.

Major Cox to Government of India.

Bushire, March 15, 1908.

(Confidential.)

IN amplification of my telegram dated the 13th March, 1908, I have the honour to forward a copy of the communication from His Majesty's Vice-Consul, Ahwaz, to my address, on the subject of accommodation necessary for the Oil Syndicate's bazaar guard.

## Inclosure 3 in No. 1.

Vice-Consul Lorimer to Major Cox.

Ahwaz, March 3, 1908.

(Confidential.)

I HAVE the honour to forward inclosed in original a letter, dated the 17th February, 1908, which I have received from Lieutenant Ranking, and a letter, dated 16th February, from the same source, to which is attached a sketch of Maidan Munaftun.\*

The subject discussed is that of providing built quarters for the officers, men, and horses of the Indian guard at Maidan Munaftun, which it is estimated can be done at a cost of 125*l*.

2. In the present state of uncertainty as to the duration of the retention of the guard, which has only been sanctioned for six months, and the further fact that Mr. Reynolds is now in private strongly of the opinion that the operations will have to be abandoned in a few months, it is probable that Government may not see its way to undertake the works proposed, which in themselves are highly desirable.

3. I would suggest, however, that should the search for oil be prolonged, and the further retention of the guard—which in that event will, in my opinion, be necessary—be decided on, the possibility of asking the Syndicate to bear a part or the whole of the expense of housing the guard to be taken into consideration.

I think that a very strong case for their doing so could be made out.

It is to be noticed that delay will increase the expense of building, if it does not otherwise make it impossible owing to the absence of labour.

4. I would beg to call particular attention to the recommendations made by Lieutenant Ranking in paragraph 9 of his letter, and to state my opinion that if the guard is to be retained at Maidan Munaftun beyond the end of May arrangements should be made to supply the tents asked for before that date.

This would mean that they should be shipped from India not later than the end of April.

## Inclosure 4 in No. 1.

Lieutenant Ranking to Vice-Consul Lorimer.

Camp Maidan Munaftun, February 16, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a sketch map of the Maidan Munaftun plain, showing the ground occupied by the Oil Company.\* In the event of the question again arising with the Khans of the Company paying for and taking over the ground so occupied, I would venture to suggest that some such amount be taken up as is inclosed within the limit A. B. which it will be seen runs along the crests of the hills which form a natural boundary to the Maidan and ground occupied by the Oil Company with the exception of the ground to the north-west of the office, &c., where the boundary might run from hill (C) following the line of the river southwards.

2. Also regarding the above question.

I hope to send by next mail a similar map (which is not quite complete yet) of the Maidan Munaftun-Batwand road, showing the portion of the road which passes through cultivable lands.

\* Not reproduced.

## Inclosure 5 in No. 1.

Lieutenant Ranking to Vice-Consul Lorimer.

Camp Maidan Munaftun, February 17, 1908.

I BEG to lay before you, for your favourable consideration, the following scheme for the housing of the escort here with me:—

I would venture to point out that it is absolutely necessary to get the men into some sort of houses before the hot weather sets in, otherwise, if they have to pass the hot weather under canvas in small tents, their efficiency must necessarily suffer owing to the heat, and also if some rough form of houses are built it will effect a saving in tentage, and in the event of oil ultimately being found here the houses might be taken over by the Oil Company for its own use, thereby effecting a clear saving to Government.

With the above object in view, I have the honour to forward herewith plans and rough estimates for favour of criticism and sanction if approved of.

2. I beg to request that permission to commence building may be granted as soon as possible, as, unless work is started within the next month or so, no labour will be obtainable, for, with the exception of those labourers working for the Oil Company, all others go up to the Galagh shortly after the 'Id-i-Nouroz.

3. The scheme is based on a total expenditure of 125*l*., which I propose to allot as follows:—

Block (A), men's quarters, to accommodate twenty men and two store rooms	£
for spare kit tents, &c. . . . .	50
Block (B), to accommodate two British officers . . . . .	50
Block (C), to accommodate eight followers and servants and British officers' cook-house . . . . .	18
Block (A) to also have pent-house roof behind as shelter for ten horses, i.e., eight escort horses and one per British officer.	

4. The main item of expenditure is the labour, for, as will be seen hereafter, the majority—I might say all—of the materials are to be had at the price of the labour of collecting and working them.

I propose to utilize the labour of the escort as opportunity offers on such work as the feeding-troughs to minimize cost, as has already been done for feeding-troughs in camp (both day and night lines) and the ambar for bhusa.

5.	To accommodate—	Rough Estimated Cost.	Time occupied in Construction.	Labour.
Block (A) . .	20 men, 2 store rooms . .	50	About five weeks . .	2 masons, 40 labourers.
Block (B) . .	2 British officers . .	50	Ditto . .	Ditto.
Block (C) . .	8 followers, 2 British officers' cook-house . .	18	Three weeks . .	2 masons, 25 labourers.
Contingencies at 5 per cent. . .	. . . . .	7		
Total . .	. . . . .	125		

6. *General.*—Walls of stone held together with mud in place of mortar and faced with gatch 2 feet thick, 10 feet high; 6 feet foundations. This uniform thickness of 2 feet for the walls has been decided on, as it is the most convenient for materials used.

Roofs domed of stone and mud, shaped with gatch castings faced with gatch.

Floors in Blocks (A) and (C) to be of rammed white sandy soil (i.e., the soil of the site suggested); if money permits, gatch floor to be substituted later.

In Block (B) floors to be of gatch.

Doors and windows to be of wood, obtained ready made from Shushter at 26 krans per door (i.e., 2 leaves lintel and door posts) and 4 to 6 krans per window (i.e., 2 leaves and frame).

Cost of above has been included in allotment.

Ventilation will be provided in Block (A) by circular air-holes 1.5 feet in diameter—one every 10 feet in back wall of men's quarters.

7. *Special.*—Roofs.—Pent-house roof of stable to be formed of surplus iron pipes of



about 1 inch in diameter if obtainable from Oil Company as trusses—if not, of “ballies” (wooden beams)—with short cross pieces of reed which grows along the banks of the streams in the vicinity (the green tops of which will be used for fodder for the horses, which they readily eat in preference to bhusa). These reeds to be finally covered with a 1-inch to 2-inch layer of mud plaster.

*Floors.*—The floor of the stable to slope 1 in 42 from the trough backwards. I propose to make the floor of stones not larger than a polo ball set in a bed made by mixing crude black oil and sand to the consistency of stiff clay. The above has been tried by me on a small scale, and appears to answer requirements. It has the advantage of forming a hard surface very similar to asphalt, easy to keep clean and free from droppings and stalings, and is cheaper than gatch to put down, as it requires no burning, its only disadvantage being its slowness in thoroughly drying in comparison with the latter. Some natural paths similar to asphalt, and which appear to have been formed by the mixing of sand and black oil, are to be found in the vicinity.

*Feeding Troughs.*—To be 1 yard from back wall of house to allow of easy access to the horses' heads. Back wall to be 4 feet high to prevent wastage of food, front wall 3 feet, bottom 2 feet, from ground level. To be made of stone and mud and plastered over with mud to save expense. No foundations.

8. *Site.*—As regards site, I would suggest that the houses be built on the site of the present camp, facing west by south in the following order: Block (B), Block (C), Block (A).

As will be seen from reference to sketch map, Maidan Munaftun (forwarded under my letter of the 16th February, 1908), the site is a central one, and has the following additional advantages:—

(1.) Is on rising ground, being a continuation of a spur of the hill to the north-east of camp.

(2.) Its soil is of white sand, hence the site is dry and well drained, and does not hold water after rain.

(3.) Is reasonably close to the animals' watering-place in the stream west of the office, &c.

(4.) An ambar for bhusa has been built with escort labour of stones and mud and faced with mud, is situated at the back of the present camp limits.

Another consideration in favour of early commencement of work is the fact that wood for burning gatch can be procured at present at rates below the average, owing to there being a large amount of wood cut ready to bring in which the Oil Company have refused to take.

The above scheme will be carried through with the utmost regard for cheapness which is compatible with good work, and if any saving is effected on the original rough estimate of 125*l.*, any such surplus will either be refunded to Government or expended in such minor works as may be deemed necessary.

9. If either on account of its expense or on account of any uncertainty as to how long the guard is to remain in Maidan Munaftun the above scheme is deemed impracticable, I venture to suggest as an alternative that 4 S. S. tents be sanctioned for the escort's use during the hot weather. This, it will be seen from “Army Regulations, India,” vol. ii, paragraph 771, as amended by Standing Army Order No. 58 of 1905, is allowable, and even these tents in the hot weather would make a great difference to the health of the escort; moreover, the freight of such tents would be comparatively small, even if they had to be shipped from India.

[33951]

No. 2.

*Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 1.)*

(No. 324.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 1, 1908.*

TURKISH intervention at Tabreez. Following is very confidential:—

I have been informed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who does not wish his name to be mentioned, that the Turkish Ambassador has made an official communication to him to the effect that the Turkish Government will send all the troops near the frontier to Tabreez in the event of any Turkish subjects being killed at that place.

[33999]

No. 3.

*Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 2.)*

(No. 285.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Constantinople, October 1, 1908.*

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier and situation in Tabreez.

The object of the communication, reported in telegram No. 324 of to-day's date, from Tehran appears to have been to influence the Government of the Shah in a constitutional direction, it does not seem to have been meant as a serious threat. Both the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Persian Ambassador told me about it a few days ago.

[34092]

No. 4.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 2.)*

(No. 325.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 2, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution. Mr. Marling's telegram No. 323 of the 30th ultimo.

A Rescript has been published by the Shah. The sense is obscure, but an intention to remodel the old Constitution appears to be indicated. A Parliament is to be convoked for the 14th November, and an Electoral Law is to be ready for proclamation on the 27th instant. It is indicated that two Chambers will sit, but no details are given in regard to them.

Until order has been restored at Tabreez, no elections will be held there.

[34094]

No. 5.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 2.)*

(No. 326.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 2, 1908.*

SITUATION in Tabreez.

On the 30th ultimo the Acting Consul-General telegraphed that it had been arranged that ten members of each party should meet and endeavour to arrive at a settlement of the situation. The Royalists, however, did not keep the appointment. The meeting was then called for yesterday evening.

[33773]

No. 6.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 279.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 2, 1908.*

PLEASE refer to telegram from Urumia dated the 24th ultimo, respecting frontier dispute.

Identical communication to Shah may now be made by you in conjunction with your Russian colleague.

[33716]

No. 7.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 2, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th ultimo, inclosing papers from the Government of India relating to the Governorship of Kain, and inquiring whether, in the circumstances, any action should be taken in connection with the Viceroy's telegram of the 14th ultimo on the subject.

[1622]

C



I am to state in reply that, in view of the opinion expressed by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran in regard to this post, there is not, in the opinion of Sir E. Grey, any necessity for further action in the matter.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

[34195]

No. 8.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 3.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 13th August, relative to the affairs of the Oil Syndicate.

*India Office, October 2, 1908.*

Inclosure 1 in No. 8.

*Captain Trevor to Government of India.*

(Confidential.)

*Bushire, July 9, 1908.*

IN continuation of my letter, dated the 13th June last, I have the honour to forward, for the information of the Government of India, a copy of a letter which I have received from Lieutenant A. T. Wilson, in charge Indian oil guards, regarding the affairs of the Oil Syndicate.

Inclosure 2 in No. 8.

*Lieutenant Wilson to Captain Trevor.*

*Mohammerah, June 29, 1908.*

IN continuation of my letter of the 26th May last, I have the honour to report that oil has been struck here at the second boring, 1 mile distant from the first, and that further boring has been stopped, as the oil issuing from the first hole comes out at such pressure as to be uncontrollable and is running to waste.

2. The combined output of these two borings when in working order should be not less than 50,000 gallons per diem, at a very cautious estimate.

3. Reservoirs to hold about 1,000,000 gallons are being constructed.

4. It is probable that work will be resumed at Mamatain next year.

[34305]

No. 9.

*Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 5.)*

(No. 618.)  
Sir,

*Constantinople, September 27, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a communication from the Persians of Constantinople, inclosing a telegram stating that a general massacre was threatened at Tabreez, and protesting against alleged intrigues by Russian officials.

I have returned no answer to this communication.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 9.

*Persian General Council, Constantinople, to Sir G. Lowther.*

Your Excellency,

*September 23, 1908.*

WE, Persians of Constantinople, on behalf of all nationalists of Persia, beg to appeal to your Excellency in reference to the undermentioned case, basing our application on the historical and traditional good relations we have always had with the British Government and the British people. According to the inclosed copy of a direct telegram received by us from Tabreez late last night, Ain-ed-Dowleh has presented an ultimatum of forty-eight hours to the Nationalists of Tabreez, demanding their immediate surrender. In contrary case, the ultimatum points out that a general massacre ("q'uatl'am") shall begin in Tabreez by Ain-ed-Dowleh's troops. The ultimatum begins from yesterday's date.

We beg to inform your Excellency that we have never permitted ourselves to make excessive demands from the Shah. On the contrary, our demands are justifiable. We only demand the restoration of order and the reinstating of the Constitution granted to us by His Majesty Muzaffar-ed-Din Shah. The present Shah's attitude for the past two years does not require any criticism on our behalf, as it is well known to your Excellency.

We beg to inform your Excellency that our ladies' Committee here received almost an official assurance from Her Majesty Queen Alexandra that His Majesty's Government, in conjunction with the Russian Government, were already taking steps to put a stop to the system of bloodshed, brigandage, and open robbery adopted by the Shah's troops in Tabreez. We regret to say that the Shah, apart from respecting such a joint Memorandum, has never even taken any notice of it.

We have reasons to believe that Russian officials non-officially assist the Shah, and interfere with the restoration of order and the reinstating of the Constitution in Persia. We beg to collectively protest against Russia's underhanded action, basing our protest on the principles of the Anglo-Russian understanding. We beg openly to state to your Excellency that Nationalist loss in Persia means the loss of British political influence there.

We beg further to inform your Excellency that up till now we have strictly adhered and favoured British policy in Persia, and we promise to honourably continue the same, should His Majesty's Government assist us in the restoration of order and the reinstating of the Constitution in Persia. Believing that your Excellency will notify the above to your Government, and awaiting your Excellency's reply, we beg to remain, &c.

(Seal) Persian General Council, Constantinople.

Inclosure 2 in No. 9.

*Sir Edward Grey to President, Committee of Persian Women, Constantinople.*

*Foreign Office, September 12, 1908.*

I AM commanded by the Queen to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram, which has been referred to me by Her Majesty. I am to inform you that His Majesty's Government, in conjunction with the Russian Government, are already taking such steps as are in their power consistently with the independence of Persia to promote the restoration of order.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) E. GREY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 9.

*Hussein Shalchi to all Persons at Constantinople.*

*Tabreez, September 22, 1908.*

THE Government has presented an ultimatum of forty-eight hours. After the expiration of same a general massacre will commence. Nationalists are ready to oppose all steps taken by the Government.

Provincial Political Council.



[34463]

No. 10.

*Treasury to Foreign Office.—(Received October 5.)*

Sir,

*Treasury Chambers, October 2, 1908.*

I AM directed by the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury to acknowledge the receipt of Sir F. A. Campbell's letter of the 21st ultimo further relative to the increase of the guard of His Majesty's Consulate at Bunder Abbas, and I am to request you to inform Secretary Sir E. Grey that, in view of the explanations now given, my Lords will not press the suggestion made in Treasury letter of the 8th ultimo that the existing detachment of cavalry should be withdrawn as soon as the infantry detachment is in attendance.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) G. H. MURRAY.

[34465]

No. 11.

*Treasury to Foreign Office.—(Received October 5.)*

Sir,

*Treasury Chambers, October 2, 1908.*

I HAVE laid before the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury Sir F. Campbell's letter of the 12th ultimo, submitting a proposal for the permanent appointment of a Military Attaché to His Majesty's Consulate-General at Meshed, at a cost varying from 574l. 8s. to 927l. 4s. a-year, to be borne equally between the Indian and Imperial Governments.

In reply, I am to request you to inform Secretary Sir E. Grey that, while my Lords can only accept the view of the Army Council that the special intelligence obtained by this Attaché under the temporary arrangement now in force is of value for Imperial purposes, they are not satisfied, on present information, that the intelligence cannot be obtained without the proposed large increase in the expenditure at Meshed. It appears that there are already two Indian officers at Meshed, as Consul-General and Vice-Consul respectively, and their Lordships have no information before them to show whether, if one of these officers could not obtain the necessary intelligence, the post of Vice-Consul could not be abolished on the appointment of a Military Attaché.

I am to take the opportunity of referring to the question (on which my Lords have not as yet received any full expression of the views of the Secretary of State) raised in the last paragraph of Treasury letter of the 25th January, 1907, as regards expenditure in Persia generally, and I am to say that their Lordships feel strongly, especially in view of the Agreement recently concluded with Russia, that an effort should be made to avoid any increase in the establishment at Meshed.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) G. H. MURRAY.

[34414]

No. 12.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 5.)*

(No. 327.)

*Tehran, October 5, 1908.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

ACTING Consul-General at Tabreez has reported that the negotiations between the Governor-General and the Nationalist party have made no progress.

[34415]

No. 13.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 5.)*

(No. 328.)

*Tehran, October 5, 1908.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

THE Shah and Constitution. Your telegram No. 277 of the 29th ultimo. Until we see whether any progress is made with the preparation of the Electoral Law promised in the Shah's rescript I would prefer to make no suggestions.

[34415]

No. 14.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 434.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 5, 1908.*

PERSIAN Constitution.

I agree with Sir G. Barclay's view, expressed in his telegram No. 328, that no suggestions should be made for the present until the preparation of the Electoral Law has made some progress.

[34651]

No. 15.

*Messrs. Ellinger and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received October 6.)*

Sir,

*28, Oxford Street, Manchester, October 5, 1908.*

I AM in receipt of your letter of the 30th ultimo, contents of which have had my careful attention.

In reply you can assure Sir Edward Grey that my firm will do its utmost to reassure the Mouin-ut-Tujjar as to the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards him.

Yours, &c.  
(Signed) M. ELLINGER.

[34607]

No. 16.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 6.)*

(No. 329.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 6, 1908.*

SITUATION at Tabreez.

The Minister of War has informed me that Ain-ed-Dowleh is not equal to his task at Tabreez, and that the Commander-in-chief has been withdrawn. It would appear from this that the Shah's cause is not going well.

Amir Bahadur spoke of reinforcements being sent.

[34631]

No. 17.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 6.)*

(No. 330.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 6, 1908.*

PROTECTION of British subjects at Tabreez. Your despatch No. 164 of the 9th ultimo.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Governor-General at Tabreez have both been informed in writing that we shall hold the Persian Government responsible for the lives and property of British subjects, and M. de Hartwig tells me that, under instructions from the Legation, the Russian Consul-General has made a similar communication to Ain-ed-Dowleh.

As it would be difficult to distinguish between damage done by troops and insurgents, it seemed desirable to give a general warning of this nature.

I have been informed by the agent of Messrs. Ziegler that his firm have not as yet suffered any direct loss, but he fears that, owing to destruction of their property, certain Persian creditors may be unable to settle their accounts.

[34876]

No. 18.

*Messrs. Frank C. Strick and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received October 8.)*

Sir,

*Baltic House, Leadenhall Street, London, October 7, 1908.*

WITH reference to your letter of the 11th ultimo, in regard to the Islands of Sirri and Jezirat Nabiyy Tanb, we think it right to inform you that our steam-ship

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"Tabaristan" called at these islands last month on her way to Bussorah, to obtain samples of the red oxide deposits which were said to exist on these islands.

We inclose extract from the Captain's letter, from which you will notice that the inhabitants of Sirri consider themselves and the Island of Jezirat Nabiyyu Tanb as being under the Governor of Lingah, whereas from your letter above referred to we gather that the rightful owner of both these islands is the Sheikh of Shargah.

What we should like to obtain is the mining rights on these islands, the Island of Nabiyyu Farur, and other islands in that locality.

We could, of course, approach the Sheikh of Shargah either through our Bussorah manager or through one of our other representatives in the Persian Gulf, but before doing so (having regard to a letter which we received from His Majesty's India Office, dated the 21st August, 1907, in connection with the Island of Abu Musa, wherein they expressed a wish that we should take no action in the matter without consulting them) we wait to hear whether you have any particular wish as to how and when we should set about trying to obtain the Concession.

We should mention that it has come to our knowledge that other people in the Persian Gulf are aware of these oxide deposits, and it would be desirable in our interests that the matter should not be longer delayed than is absolutely necessary.

We have, &c.

(For Messrs. Frank C. Strick and Co., Limited),  
(Signed) FRANK C. STRICK.

Inclosure in No. 18.

*Captain F. Paton to Messrs. Frank C. Strick and Co.*

(Extract.)

*Bussorah, August 28, 1908.*

AS per your instructions, I called at the Island of Nabiyyu Tanb on the 21st, arriving at the anchorage 3 P.M. I at once went ashore, taking some of the crew with me, and took some samples of the oxide from several spots. As far as I can judge, they do not seem to be of bad quality, but appear to be mostly on the surface. On digging down, we came to loose stones, which seem to be mixed with it. The getting of these seven samples took about 2½ hours, and just as it was getting dark we noticed that there was another hill of it away at the other end of the island, but the heat was so intense, and the walking so bad, that we were almost quite overcome, and had to return to the ship. There are no inhabitants on the island, and no wells of fresh water. I do not know if it is possible to dig any, but during the cool weather the island is pretty well covered with vegetation, so I should think it possible to do so.

The next morning I left at 2:45 for the Island of Sirri, arriving at the anchorage there 6:30 A.M. I intended to go on shore myself, but was still feeling the effects of the dreadful heat at Nabiyyu Tanb, so I sent the chief officer, with the serang, one fireman, and a Persian steward (to interpret). After being away some two hours they returned, and had found it so fearfully hot that the chief officer fairly collapsed on the deck, and the others were nearly as bad. However, they brought four samples from one place where there was a good lot of the oxide showing. The chief officer tells me that on digging down to more than a depth of 2 feet they still found the oxide the same, so that I should think it would be a likely spot. I have rubbed out some of the samples, and, as far as I can judge, the colour and strength is fairly good, but of course I am not an expert.

We were anchored off the southern village of Sirri, in about 7 fathoms of water, the holding ground moderately good. There is plenty of water on this island, and quite a number of inhabitants. When we were there nearly all the men were away pearl fishing, and only the women and one or two of the old men left. They said the island was under the Government of Lingah (Persian), as is also Nabiyyu Tanb. I do not think that oxide has ever been loaded there. These men also said that there was plenty of it at the northern end of the island, but the sailing directions state that there is very bad anchorage there. When leaving the island I steamed round there, and found that there were a good many reefs sticking out of the water to a distance of about half a mile from the shore. However, there may be an anchorage between them.

After leaving Sirri I passed within a few miles of Nabiyyu Farur, and by the look of the land there I should say there is oxide also. This is under the Governor of Lingah, the same as Farur, and most of the other islands in the neighbourhood. A much better survey could be made when the weather is more favourable.

[34993]

No. 19.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 9.)*

Sir,

*India Office, October 8, 1908.*

I AM directed to forward, to be laid before the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 4th instant, proposing that, in view of the possibility of attack by the Afghans engaged in the illicit arms traffic, Mr. New, the Assistant Superintendent in charge of the Indo-European Telegraph Department's line at Jask, should be furnished with an escort of thirty men from the Mekran Levy Corps for his protection during his forthcoming annual tour of inspection.

A Memorandum on the subject by the Director-in-chief, Indo-European Telegraph Department, is inclosed.

Viscount Morley considers it would be undesirable, in the circumstances, to incur the risk of delay involved in obtaining the previous consent of the Persian Government, and, subject to Sir E. Grey's concurrence, he proposes to approve the course recommended by the Government of India. Lord Morley would suggest that it might be left to the discretion of His Majesty's Minister at Tehran whether to inform the Persian Government at once of the action taken by His Majesty's Government or to wait till the Persian Government raises the question. In either case it might be pointed out that the escort does not consist of regular troops of the Indian army, but of local levies of the nature of police.

I am to request the favour of an early reply.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 19.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*October 4, 1908.*

IN view of possibility of attacks by Afghans, the Director of Persian Gulf Telegraphs recommends that an escort of twenty-five to thirty sepoys should be given while on tour to Mr. New, the Assistant Superintendent, Jask. Major Cox and Sir A. McMahon support the proposal. The latter says that it will probably be necessary to place more troops along the Persian coast, in view of the conditions of arms traffic this season, and that Mr. New may require a larger escort if this is not done. We consider that Director-General's request should be granted, in view of active part played by Mr. New in measures for suppressing arms traffic (see despatch of the 17th June from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran). We propose that, as a measure of protection, an escort of thirty men from the Mekran Levy Corps should be given to Mr. New. We would ask, in the event of your approval, that requisite steps for obtaining consent of Persian authorities may be taken.

Inclosure 2 in No. 19.

*Memorandum by Mr. Kirk.*

MR. NEW is the Assistant Superintendent in charge of the telegraph line from Jask to Gwadar, 321 miles in length, of which all but some 50 miles lie within Persian territory. He ought to be moving into camp immediately to look after the repairs and maintenance work of the line. He has reported that the connection of the Telegraph Department with the measures that were taken last season for suppressing the arms traffic has to some extent become known to the Afghans, and, in the event of an attack on his camp, his present small escort of untrained Baluchis would be unable to make any proper defence. The Government of India are prepared to give him an escort of thirty men of the Mekran Levy Corps. They ask that the necessary steps may be taken to obtain consent of the Persian authorities. If this consent is asked for the working season may pass before it is obtained. I do not know what is the exact status in the Indian army of a Levy Corps. The Indian Army List shows that



the Mekran Levy Corps is commanded by an Assistant Political Agent, the only other officer connected with it being an Adjutant. If the view could be taken that the thirty men of the Levy Corps were not soldiers of the Indian army, there would seem to be little objection to employing these men as an escort for Mr. New without asking any permission from the Persian authorities.

(Signed) H. A. KIRK.

October 5, 1908.

[34971]

No. 20.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 9.)*

(No. 331.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, October 9, 1908.

THE Acting Consul-General at Tabreez reported yesterday that the Governor-General has refused to allow any necessities of life to be brought into the city, and has closed all the entries.

There is great dissatisfaction and distress; the Nationalists are without money, and are desperate. Mr. Stevens fears Consulates may be mobbed and foreigners molested, and very serious consequences may ensue. The situation is very critical.

Mr. Stevens declines to assume any responsibility for what may happen, and considers that in such difficult times the Consul-General ought to be at his post.

The "Times" correspondent left for Constantinople on the 6th instant.

The Shah's Rescript is generally regarded here as a mockery, and, as far as I can gather, no serious attempt is being made to frame the Electoral Law mentioned in it.

I have again warned the Minister for Foreign Affairs in regard to the lives and property of British subjects at Tabreez, and this afternoon I shall see M. de Hartwig.

[35027]

No. 21.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 9.)*

(No. 332.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, October 9, 1908.

SITUATION at Tabreez.

Referring to my telegram No. 331 of to-day's date, I have seen M. de Hartwig, who has no news from Tabreez, but he is instructing the Russian Consul-General to concert with Mr. Stevens to protest to Ain-ed-Dowleh against his action in depriving the peaceful population of the city and the foreign Consulates of supplies.

M. de Hartwig appears more hopeful than my information would warrant in regard to the electoral law. His Excellency will let me know the result of the inquiries which he promises to make as to the prospects of its publication.

[33437]

No. 22.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 311.)  
Sir,

Foreign Office, October 9, 1908.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith a copy of a Confidential despatch, as marked in the margin,\* from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, on the subject of Persian finances.

As you will observe, Mr. Marling is extremely sceptical as to the necessity for raising a foreign loan. I consider that his observations in regard to this question are thoughtful and to the point; and I have to request your Excellency to communicate to the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs such extracts from his despatch as you may deem advisable.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) E. GREY.

\* Mr. Marling, No. 251, September 10, 1908.

[34971]

No. 23.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.*

(No. 321.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.  
TABREEZ disturbances.

Foreign Office, October 9, 1908.

The situation at Tabreez is serious; have you any objection to Wratislaw returning thither?

[33989]

No. 24.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 9, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th ultimo, inclosing a copy of a telegram, dated the 27th ultimo, from the Viceroy, and correspondence from the Government of India relative to the operations of the Oil Concessions Syndicate in the neighbourhood of Ahwaz.

With regard to the final paragraph of your letter, I am to inform you that Sir E. Grey would suggest, for the consideration of the Secretary of State for India, that the Syndicate should be asked whether they consider that the retention of the guard will be necessary. It should be explained that buildings would have to be erected for its accommodation, and, if so, that the Syndicate will be expected to bear the cost.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[35070]

No. 25.

*Sir C. MacDonald to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 10.)*

(No. 230.)  
Sir,

Tokio, September 11, 1908.

IN your despatch No. 168 of the 9th July you instructed me to take an opportunity of intimating to the Japanese Government that, in the event of their desiring at any time to appoint a Consular Representative at Bushire, the selection of a British subject in that capacity would be agreeable to His Majesty's Government in view of their special position in the Persian Gulf.

In the course of an interview yesterday with Count Komura I drew attention to the subject. His Excellency replied that at present Japan had no Treaty with Persia, but in the event of their concluding one he would bear in mind what I had said, and he was convinced that the Japanese Government would fall in with the views of His Majesty's Government on the matter. He added that negotiations had been commenced before the war, but that nothing had resulted. He thought negotiations would shortly be recommenced, and the Japanese Government would value any assistance which His Majesty's Government might be in a position to give.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) CLAUDE M. MACDONALD.

[35114]

No. 26.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 10.)*

(No. 333.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, October 10, 1908.

SITUATION in Tabreez.

Acting Consul-General reported yesterday that at 1 A.M. the Nationalists made a simultaneous attack on the Governor-General's camp and the Maku cavalry who held the Adji Bridge. Rifle and gun fire continued till dawn; the camp of Ain-ed-Dowleh was thrown into great confusion; fighting against the cavalry went on until noon. After having completely routed the cavalry, who abandoned their position, the Nationalists occupied the Adji Bridge.

The casualties in all amount to 150.

[1622]

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[35189]

No. 27.

*Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 10.)*

(No. 312.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Constantinople, October 10, 1908.*

YOUR telegram No. 321.

I sent my telegram No. 253 of the 18th ultimo on hearing of the condition of Tabreez and that Turkish troops were being withdrawn, and now see no reason why Mr. Wratislaw should not return.

[34993]

No. 28.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 282.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 10, 1908.*

SEE telegram of the 4th October from India Office.

His Majesty's Government propose to approve the course which the Government of India recommends, but it is left to your discretion whether to wait until the question is raised by the Persian Government or to notify the matter to them at once. In any case, the fact that the escort is only composed of local levies similar to police might be pointed out to them.

[33780]

No. 29.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 10, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, the accompanying draft of a Memorandum,\* which Sir E. Grey proposes to communicate to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of railway construction in Persia.

I am to request that Sir E. Grey may be furnished with Lord Morley's observations on this Memorandum at the earliest possible opportunity.

I am, &amp;c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[35191]

No. 30.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 11.)*

(No. 334.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 11, 1908.*

SHAH and the Constitution and situation at Tabreez.

M. de Hartwig and I have discussed the present situation, and we have agreed to make an identic verbal communication to the Minister for Foreign Affairs at his weekly reception on Wednesday, with the request that he will convey it to His Imperial Majesty. Following is the text of the joint communication:—

"The recent Rescript having given rise to erroneous interpretations, it is much to be desired, in the Shah's own interest, that he should publish a separate Decree clearly showing that it was in no way his intention to exclude one province from the rights which His Majesty has accorded to his people, but that he had hoped that the persons fighting under Satar Khan would lay down their arms so as to facilitate the re-establishment of the constitutional régime.

"It would, moreover, be useful, in view of the near approach of the 27th October, to publish the electoral laws mentioned in the Rescript as early as possible, in order to enable the elections to be held for the date fixed (the 14th November).

"It would also be desirable, inasmuch as many of those in arms are desperate, that the Shah should announce his intention to amnesty those now fighting provided they submit."

[35214]

No. 31.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 12.)*

(No. 430.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, September 29, 1908.*

M. TCHARYKOFF informed me yesterday that the Shah had issued his Proclamation, but that he understood it was written in exceedingly ornate language, was difficult to understand, and had passages which were in contradiction with each other. For instance, it was announced that the Assembly was to be convoked on the 14th November, and in another passage it was stated that new electoral regulations would be promulgated on the same date. It was difficult to reconcile these statements; and I gather that M. Tcharykoff was not satisfied with the document. He said that he would be quite ready to join with His Majesty's Government in making further representations at Tehran if they wished to do so, and if they would inform him what steps they thought would be likely to lead towards clearing up the question.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[35307]

No. 32.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 12.)*

(No. 335.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 12, 1908.*

TABREEZ.

A body of some 400 Persian Cossacks has left Tehran for Tabreez taking four guns with them. This force is to be accompanied by one or more Russian officers.

I am informed by M. de Hartwig that the task of the Russian officers will be to prevent pillage, and that they will not enter Tabreez until hostilities have ceased.

[35189]

No. 33.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 284.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 12, 1908.*

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

Mr. Wratislaw can now be instructed to go back from Urumia to Tabreez.

[35307]

No. 34.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 483.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 12, 1908.*

TABREEZ situation.

Any employment of Russian officers in suppressing the present popular agitation in Tabreez will be most unfavourably viewed by His Majesty's Government.

We fully recognize the fact that official interference is beyond our rights, but the Russian Government should be given to understand that if use must be made of Cossack troops it is deplorable that the officers in command should not all be Persians.

[35533]

No. 35.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 13.)*

(No. 199.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 13, 1908.*

TABREEZ. Your telegram No. 483 of the 12th instant.

I am informed by M. Tcharykoff that instructions were sent a week ago to Russian Minister at Tehran that Russian officers are to remain at Tehran until peace is re-established at Tabreez, and that none of them were to accompany any Cossacks who



might be sent there. Russian officers will probably await return of Cossacks to Tehran when tranquillity is restored in Tabreez.

M. Tcharykoff added that he had to-day sent a telegram to the above effect to the Russian Ambassador in London.

[35989]

No. 36.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 323.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 13, 1908.*

M. ISVOLSKY and Count Benckendorff dined at my house last night with Lord Morley, and we discussed questions of Persia and Afghanistan.

I explained the bad effect upon public opinion here of the conduct of Russian officers in Persia. The action of Colonel Liakhoff was past, but the further news that Russian officers were going with 400 Cossacks to join the Shah's forces and crush the Nationalist party at Tabreez would create a most unfavourable impression.

M. Isvolsky dwelt upon the great loss to Russia, amounting to millions, which results from the disorder in the Province of Azerbaijan. The situation in Persia was really intolerable, and one party was as bad as the other, though one went by the name of Nationalist. Revolutionists from the Caucasus went into this province, and Satar Khan was no more worthy of consideration than the Shah. M. Isvolsky spoke with great frankness of the Shah's Government, for which he said he had no preference whatever. The difficulty was to find some way in which order could be produced and maintained. Apparently there was nothing in Persia capable of doing this; and while he adhered to the policy of non-intervention, he found it exceedingly difficult to carry out.

I said it seemed to us that the action of the Russian officers amounted to just enough intervention in favour of the Shah to prevent anything better from taking the place of the Government of the Shah. If the Russian officers would content themselves with the protection of the Shah's person, or even if they could be withdrawn altogether for six months, something better might come to the top.

M. Isvolsky expressed his willingness to see the Russian officers replaced by Swiss or officers from any other neutral country.

It was explained to him that we were not in the least jealous of the employment of Russian officers as such. We did not for a moment wish to attempt to diminish the influence which Russia had gained in the north of Persia; on the contrary, we recognized it by the Convention. All we wished was that the action of the Russian officers should be such that, when questioned in Parliament, we could explain it and reconcile it with the policy of non-intervention.

M. Isvolsky said that he intended to send M. Poklevski as soon as possible to Tehran. M. Poklevski agreed entirely with us as to what was the best policy in Persia, and he would receive instructions to carry out that policy. M. Isvolsky himself was much impressed with the difficulties of this policy, but he would say to M. Poklevski, "You believe in it; go and try it."

M. Isvolsky admitted that M. Hartwig was very backward in carrying out the instructions which were sent to him. He said that in his view the action of the Russian officers should be confined to acting as instructors to the Persian forces, and that they should not take any part in the fighting.

We had some conversation about Afghanistan.

We explained the difficulties which we had with the Ameer. We told him the absurd construction which the Ameer had placed upon the Convention, arguing that, by implication, it gave Russia and England a right to make railways and telegraphs in Afghanistan, and that by sending commercial agents into the country, where they would be killed, it would be made necessary that the Afghans should be disarmed.

We told M. Isvolsky how we proposed to reply to the Ameer, but it might take some time to get his consent to the Convention.

M. Isvolsky replied that, in his opinion, the consent of the Ameer was not necessary to the working of the Convention, and he proposed that we should continue to work it without waiting for the Ameer's consent. He said he was quite willing to do so.

To this proposal Lord Morley and I cordially agreed. At the same time, we would continue our efforts to secure the Ameer's consent.

We could, of course, assure the Ameer that no commercial agents would be forced upon him against his will.

M. Isvolsky said that, in his own opinion, Afghan trade was really of little importance, and the Russians did not in the least desire to press the question of commercial agents unduly.

We told M. Isvolsky that, if this was so, as the Ameer had raised no objections to Article 3, and was not prohibiting communication between his frontier officials and those of Russia, we saw no reason why the Convention should not continue to work quite well, for the Ameer was in practice acting upon it.

The general impression left by this conversation was very favourable.

I am, &amp;c.

(Signed) E. GREY.

[34876]

No. 37.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 13, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, the accompanying copy of a letter from Messrs. F. C. Strick and Co. (Limited),<sup>o</sup> inquiring how they should set about obtaining Mining Concessions on the Islands of Sirri, Little Tamb, and Nabiyyu Farur, and on other islands which they do not expressly specify.

Sir E. Grey does not consider that His Majesty's Government can support Messrs. Strick at Sirri, since on the 19th September last His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran was instructed to inform the local agent of Messrs. Hadji, Ali, Akbar, and Co., of Manchester, that no objection would be taken by His Majesty's Government to his application for a Concession on that island from the Persian Government.

As regards Little Tamb, Sir E. Grey proposes to inform Messrs. Strick that His Majesty's Government will support their request for a Concession; and, if Lord Morley concurs, he proposes to add that negotiations should be conducted with the Sheikh of Shargah through the British Resident.

Sir E. Grey assumes that Nabiyyu Farur is within Persian jurisdiction, but he would be glad to be furnished with the observations of Lord Morley on this point, and also in regard to the reply which should be made to Messrs. Strick concerning their desire for a Concession on this island.

As to the other islands in the locality to which Messrs. Strick refer, Sir E. Grey proposes to reply that no information can be given by this Department until the particular islands concerned are definitely indicated.

I am, &amp;c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[35610]

No. 38.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 14.)*

(No. 336.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 14, 1908.*

SITUATION at Tabreez.

Acting Consul-General reported yesterday in telegram No. 154 that the Davatchi quarter, the Royalist centre, has surrendered to the Nationalists, and has delivered over five cannon to them.

The Mujtehid, Nir Nashim, and Shuja Nejam, the Commander of the Marand cavalry, and all the Royalists have fled.



[35600]

No. 39.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 14.)*

(No. 337.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

*Tehran, October 14, 1908.*

SITUATION at Tabreez. My telegram No. 336 of to-day.

I am informed by Minister for Foreign Affairs that Ain-ed-Dowleh has been dismissed from the Governorship of Tabreez, and that Farman Fauna has been designated to succeed him.

[35708]

No. 40.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 497.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 14, 1908.*

VISIT of Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs to London.

Our views on the Dardanelles question have been handed to his Excellency in the form of a Memorandum. He agrees to it, although he had hoped it would go further. We have also arrived at a decision as to the subjects to be discussed at a Conference. Although Ameer refuses to consent to the Afghan Convention, the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs is ready to continue to work it, and negotiations to obtain the Ameer's consent will continue. I made a complaint to M. Isvolsky as to the conduct of the Russian officers at present stationed in Persia; this he received in good part.

On the whole I am persuaded that our conversations will have decidedly satisfactory results.

[33780]

No. 41.

*Memorandum handed to M. Isvolsky, October 14, 1908.*

HIS Majesty's Government have examined with much interest and careful attention the *aide-memoire* communicated by the Russian Government to His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg on the 2nd (15th) August on the subject of railway construction in Persia.

Some misapprehension appears to have arisen in regard to the precise nature of the proposals of His Majesty's Government, who, in approaching the Russian Government, contemplated *not* actual construction, but rather timely co-operation in earmarking Concessions which otherwise might be exploited to the detriment of Great Britain and Russia.

His Majesty's Government attach the highest importance to a complete understanding with the Russian Government on this question. They consider, however, for reasons which will be indicated forthwith, that any Convention now concluded by the two Powers with the Persian Government should be of a protective character, and calculated to assure to Great Britain and Russia a secure position as regards enterprises involving political issues whenever the time is ripe for construction.

Apart from the uncertainty of the political situation, there are many factors, now unknown quantities, which, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, render impracticable, in existing circumstances, any definite scheme of railway development in Persia, such, for instance, as the absence, at any rate in Southern Persia, of all surveys, even of a preliminary character, as the ultimate constitution of the Bagdad Railway Company, and as the question of whether or not a branch line is constructed from Bagdad to Khanikin. Many developments of this nature must be awaited before a railway from Julfa to Mohammerah can be built with adequate prospects of commercial success.

Moreover, the principal obstacle to railway construction in the immediate future is undoubtedly to be found in the governing consideration of cost, and in the difficulty of securing the necessary capital.

The Russian *aide-memoire* emphasizes the inability of the Persian Government to meet the requisite expenditure, and the reluctance of the Russian Ministry of Finance to afford pecuniary assistance for this purpose. His Majesty's Government on their part are fully persuaded that no projects of railway enterprise in Persia in the present

economic and political condition of the country would be sufficiently attractive to induce British capitalists to select them as a field for investment; while His Majesty's Government would not feel justified in guaranteeing a *minimum* rate of interest where the risk involved would be difficult to estimate, but undoubtedly considerable.

His Majesty's Government find some difficulty in appreciating the full inwardness of the suggestion contained in the Russian *aide-memoire* that the question of an important external loan is intimately connected with that of a Railway Concession, and should be dealt with simultaneously. If it is considered that a loan should be made to Persia on more favourable terms than would otherwise be the case, in return for the grant of a Railway Concession, then an addition must be made *pro tanto* to the cost of constructing the railway. His Majesty's Government are not convinced that such procedure would be financially expedient, and they incline to the belief that it would tend to simplicity if these distinctive operations were to be considered upon their respective merits.

As regards the question of an external loan, a comprehensive despatch, of which the substance will shortly be communicated to the Russian Government by His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg, has recently been received from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran on the subject of the actual financial position of the Persian Government.

Mr. Marling, after reviewing the principal aspects of the question, arrives at the conclusion that the resources of the Persian State are, if properly administered, amply sufficient to enable necessary expenditure to be covered by existing revenue, and he expresses his conviction that any large advance made to the Persian Government from abroad might, in the long run, aggravate rather than effectually relieve the present financial stress.

His Majesty's Government consider that the efforts of Great Britain and Russia should be directed to impressing upon the Persian Government that the real interests of the State imperatively demand a policy of retrenchment and financial reform; that such reform must constitute the bed-rock of all economic progress and commercial prosperity; and that, as a preliminary step in the desired direction, the Persian authorities should make it their first aim to afford the Financial Inspector full support and loyal co-operation.

It is, in the view of His Majesty's Government, only upon the establishment of financial equilibrium in the Persian Budget that the question of actual railway construction in the country can be faced with due regard to the elementary principles of commercial prudence. This construction should, they consider, be carried out under such conditions that a *minimum* rate of interest upon the capital involved would be secured, without the risk of defalcation, by the Persian Government.

His Majesty's Government are of opinion that, in view of the important political interests at issue, Great Britain and Russia would be fully justified in informing the Persian Government that, in the event of railway communications being established in Persia, they would expect to have the refusal, upon terms equally favourable to any offered by third parties, of all Concessions which might be in contemplation.

His Majesty's Government are well aware of the existence of the Russo-Persian understanding which precludes the grant of any Railway Concession in Persia before November 1910.

A somewhat similar arrangement is in force between His Majesty's Government and the Persian Government whereby, in the event of railway construction being undertaken north of Tehran, a Concession for a railway in the south would forthwith be accorded to a British Company.

His Majesty's Government would suggest that these Agreements might well be made the basis of a further communication to the Persian Government, and at the same time the British and Russian Governments might intimate the lines to which they respectively attach especial importance.

The Russian Government have already acquainted His Majesty's Government with their views on this aspect of the question. His Majesty's Government, on their part, besides the southern section of a line which may be built from Julfa to Mohammerah, would specify, as the Concessions which most closely concern them, the lines Bunder Abbas to Kerman, and Bunder Abbas, via Shiraz, to Ahwaz, with the option to construct a port at Khor Musa.

It is stated in the Russian *aide-memoire* that the lines in the Russian sphere should serve to maintain and develop Russian interests (a) by the chronological order in which they are built, and (b) by adjustment of Tariff rates on the Mohammerah Railway.



His Majesty's Government consider that the drawbacks, in existing circumstances, of entering into detail as to the adjustment of Tariff rates, the allotment of shares, or the constitution of the Board of Control, are obvious, and they submit that any attempt to settle these matters would be premature and likely to lead to future embarrassment. However far they might be prepared to meet the Russian Government in regard to the order in which the several lines may be built (a point which may well be reserved for subsequent consideration), they cannot but feel that it would be well-nigh impossible, if the Mohammerah Railway is to be worked on a commercial basis, to assent to anything that could be regarded as a discrimination of Tariff rates in favour of Russian goods.

In conclusion, His Majesty's Government, animated by a spirit of sincere friendship towards the Russian Government, and impressed with the importance of avoiding any action which may prejudice the beneficial development of commercial and political relations between the two countries, venture to express the hope that the question of connecting Askhabad with Meshed by rail may be allowed, for the present, to remain in abeyance. They are apprehensive lest, in the existing state of political feeling in Afghanistan, an additional element of unrest might be introduced into a situation which is already not devoid of difficulty if this question were to be prematurely brought into prominence.

*Foreign Office, October 9, 1908.*

[35859]

No. 42.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 16.)*

Sir,

*India Office, October 15, 1908.*

IN reply to your letter of the 2nd instant, I am directed to inclose copy of further papers received from India by this week's mail as to the Governorship of Kain.

It appears from the Consul, in Seistan's telegrams to the Government of India of the 20th and 21st September, repeating telegrams addressed to the Legation at Tehran on those dates, that orders have been given for the dismissal of the Shaukat and the appointment of the Hashmat.

Viscount Morley would suggest, for Sir E. Grey's consideration, that His Majesty's Minister at Tehran might be instructed to furnish a report on the situation.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 42.

*Major Kennion to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic) P.

*Birjand, September 5, 1908.*

I HAVE sent the following to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran:—

“(No. 89.)

“Shaukat received a telegram from Hassan Khan stating that Kain Governorship had been given to Hashmat-ul-Mulk for 59,000 tomans, part advanced in cash and balance guaranteed by Russian Bank. He added, however, that Shaukat could save himself by sending 30,000 tomans at once. Shaukat asks for a loan from bank to enable him to pay. I would ask that the advisability of guaranteeing a loan may be considered if it is not possible to secure Shaukat's retention in any other way.

“Shaukat could, I believe, pay a very large amount without assistance, but, in order to avoid further exactions, it is essential for him to make it appear necessary to borrow. Failing Imperial Bank of Persia, Shaukat will probably raise loan from the Muavin Utajjar, who gave him previous loan in connection with Russian Bank. I am continuing to advise Shaukat not to pay pending your reply.”

(Repeated to Consul-General, Khorassan.)

Inclosure 2 in No. 42.

*Major Kennion to Government of India.*

(No. 91.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Birjand, September 8, 1908.*

MY immediately preceding telegram.

Shaukat, whom I saw to-day, showed me a telegram from Second Agent, who states that Hashmat-ul-Mulk has been appointed Governor and that Firman has been issued. Matter is to be kept secret, and Firman is to be produced only on arrival of Hashmat-ul-Mulk or his son at Birjand.

Inclosure 3 in No. 42.

*Major Kennion to Government of India.*

(No. 92.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Birjand, September 8, 1908.*

PLEASE see my telegram immediately preceding.

The Shaukat inquires whether it would now be possible or advisable to remit money to Shah and Ministers concerned through Tehran Legation, as he has begun to distrust agents. He asks for advice and information as to facts. Hashmat-ul-Mulk's success would, I may point out, be disastrous to our position in both Kain and Seistan. That it will result in some disturbances is also not unlikely.

Inclosure 4 in No. 42.

*Government of India to Major Kennion.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Simla, September 11, 1908.*

DID you address to the Legation your telegrams Nos. 91 and 92 of the 8th instant about the Governorship of Kain?

Inclosure 5 in No. 42.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Simla, September 14, 1908.*

GOVERNORSHIP of Kain.

Please refer to your Lordship's telegram of the 30th April, 1907. Our Consul in Seistan has been informed that the Governorship has been secured by the Hashmat-ul-Mulk for 59,000 tomans, part paid in cash and balance guaranteed by Russian Bank, and that Firman of appointment has been issued, but is kept secret and will not be produced until arrival at Birjand of Hashmat or his son. It is urged by Major Kennion that, even if there is no disturbance, this will be disastrous to our position. He has been in telegraphic correspondence with the Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, but it is not clear whether this information has been sent to him. We repeat it for your information, and can only reiterate our objections to appointment of Hashmat under obligation to Russia. We trust His Majesty's Government will be able to secure Shaukat-ul-Mulk's retention in Governorship of Kain.

Inclosure 6 in No. 42.

*Major Kennion to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Birjand, September 9, 1908.*

FOLLOWING sent to Tehran:—

(No. 93.)

“Mirza Baba sent Shaukat a telegram saying that he could still arrange matter if 30,000 tomans were telegraphed; so matter apparently not finally settled. I would point out that, prior to the Treaty of 1856, on occasion similar to this, the Ruler of



Kain would have asked for assistance from Herat, and this in days when Afghanistan was less strong than now and Persia stronger. People are with Shaukat, and Sunni Khana would be delighted to come under an Orthodox Ameer. For being preserved from a state of affairs on this frontier similar to that existing on the Turkish frontier it is practically ourselves only that the Shah has to thank. I am of opinion that the Persian Government should attach some weight to this argument with its corollaries."

(Repeated to Consul-General, Khorassan.)

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Inclosure 7 in No. 42.

*Major Kennion to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Birjand, September 10, 1908.*

I HAVE received the following telegrams from Tehran, which are repeated for information. No. 48, dated 9th September:—

"Your telegram No. 92.

"Money cannot be remitted to Shah by Legation."

From Minister. No. 49, dated 9th September:—

"Your telegram No. 89.

"Since you anticipate the return of Hashmat-ul-Mulk will result in disorders, I am quite ready to do what I can to prevent it, but I cannot see that otherwise our interests are so bound up with retention of Shaukat as to justify our guaranteeing loan to him. Moreover, it should be easy enough for Shaukat to effect a fictitious loan if he can find money himself."

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Inclosure 8 in No. 42.

*Major Kennion to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Birjand, September 11, 1908.*

I HAVE sent the following telegram to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran:—

"(No. 96.)

"Your telegram No. 48.

"My reasons for believing our interests to be bound up with Shaukat's retention are as follows. He has shown himself openly friendly to us for the past two years, and as a result our prestige, influence, and trade have increased in a marked manner. This is shown in many ways, perhaps most noteworthy being the way Afghan claims are settled on our request. Our influence will continue and increase as long as Shaukat remains, and especially if we help him now. It is well known that Legation have in the past successfully intervened in his behalf. If for no obvious reason Shaukat is now dismissed, we not only lose all the advantages to be derived from the friendship of the Local Government, but it will be widely regarded as a proof of our inability to look after our own interests and help our own friends even in our own sphere. It will further be regarded as a triumph for the Shah, reactionaries and Russians, for it was only last year the latter were prevented by the Assembly from securing the appointment of Hashmat-ul-Mulk by means of a loan. Russians will thus obtain influence and corresponding advantages in Kainat that we have now, whether they desire it or not. Can you telegraph actual state of affairs now, and what chances of success Hashmat-ul-Mulk has? It will be of the highest value to Shaukat in deciding steps to be taken if trustworthy information on these points can be obtained."

(Repeated to Consul-General, Khorassan.)

Inclosure 9 in No. 42.

*Major Kennion to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Birjand, September 12, 1908.*

FOLLOWING sent to His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran:—

"(No. 95).

"Please see your telegram No. 48. The Shaukat's personal assets consist of land, live-stock, gold and jewels—existence of two latter are kept a secret. It would not be possible for him to realize a money loan on any of these. He can raise 10,000 in cash, and whatever he has to pay in excess will have to be borrowed.

"He has asked whether, in case of necessity, he can rely on loan from Imperial Bank of Persia of 15,000 or 20,000. The guarantees of loan would be eleven wealthiest men in Kain, namely, Haji Ahmad Beg, Haji Eusuf Beg, Mahomed Wali Mustaufi, Haji Muhammad Mohsin, Malik-ut-Tujar, Karbilai Muhammad Haji Ghulan Reza, Haji Muhammad Ali (Takeharbadi), Haji Abdul Ali Khan, Meshed-i-Rahim, Mullah Ahmad Sarchai, Ali Akbar Ismail. If Bank will not accept these guarantees, I would suggest advisability of additional guarantee being furnished by Government."

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Inclosure 10 in No. 42.

*Major Kennion to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Birjand, September 13, 1908.*

KAIN Governorship.

The telegrams referred to in your telegram No. S/548, were addressed to Tehran Legation.

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Inclosure 11 in No. 42.

*Major Kennion to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Birjand, September 13, 1908.*

HIS Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, telegraphed on the 12th September as follows:—

"(No. 50.)

"For the most obvious reasons I could not use the argument you suggest in your telegram No. 93. Money is the only argument to which Persian Government will listen at present. Shaukat should make sure that Hashmat-ul-Mulk has actually parted with his money if he is willing to pay 30,000 tomans to get the Hashmat's Firman cancelled. Hashmat-ul-Mulk would probably find it difficult to raise more if it has been paid.

"Your telegram No. 95. I hope you have not committed yourself too far in promising assistance to Shaukat, as Russian Minister is giving me some support."

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Inclosure 12 in No. 42.

*Major Kennion to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Birjand, September 14, 1908.*

FOLLOWING sent to Tehran:—

"(No. 98.)

"Please see your telegram No. 50. I have now told Shaukat that he will have to send the money. He is offering 22,000 tomans, the amount first demanded by his agents.

"I trust it will be possible to apply sufficient pressure on Persian Government to enable him to retain Governorship without paying more. Otherwise he will have reason to regret having relied on our support."



"If the demands of the Persian Government, in addition to revenue, are not moderated, the Shaukat will be ruined now or later and dismissed, and as the money comes out of the people, we have some right to guard against state of things which will follow."

Inclosure 13 in No. 42.

*Major Kennion to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Birjand, September 17, 1908.*

I HAVE sent the following telegram to Minister, No. 99, dated the 17th September:—

"Following received from Daukes:—

"I was informed privately a day or two ago by Milkaevitch that 13,000 tomans had been lent to Deputy Governor, on security of revenue, by the Russian Bank; he also mentioned that 10,000 tomans had been forwarded to Tehran shortly before this loan, and I gathered from him that this amount also had been advanced. These advances were made within the last month or so, and have already, according to Milkaevitch, been repaid in full. This, however, seems improbable. Muhammad Raza independently confirmed statement re last loan of 13,000, and there is no doubt regarding this."

"Your telegram No. 51. Loan would be safe independently of the question of the Governorship. In these circumstances, I would submit that guarantee would not necessarily commit us to maintain the Shaukat. 3,000 kharvars of grain can be pledged as additional security."

"Shaukat can borrow elsewhere, with the ample security mentioned, at 24 per cent., but it would seem inadvisable to lose opportunity of helping in this way since we cannot afford him much direct assistance. Would not the bank, on your recommendation, make loan, without guarantee, as a special case?"

Inclosure 14 in No. 42.

*Major Kennion to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Birjand, September 17, 1908.*

CHARGE D'AFFAIRES at Tehran telegraphs as follows, No. 51, dated the 14th September:—

"Your telegram No. 96. In accordance with general instructions from London to limit such operations in view of disturbed political conditions of country, bank will not advance. I cannot recommend a guarantee of any kind by Government which would be undesirable on general grounds, and would practically commit us to maintaining Shaukat at all costs. There are indications that Hashmat-ul-Mulk is not so sure of his game as he previously was."

Inclosure 15 in No. 42.

*Major Kennion to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Birjand, September 20, 1908.*

FOLLOWING sent to His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, No. 102, dated the 20th September:—

"Kain Governorship. Very urgent. I hear Hashmat-ul-Mulk left Tehran on the 18th, and that Mir Masum has been made Deputy Governor of Kainat, and leaves Seistan in three days. Is this a manoeuvre to squeeze Shaukat or is it correct? If true, and it is not stopped disturbances may be expected. People will take bast under British flag, and it will be difficult to stop them as I am in camp."

Inclosure 16 in No. 42.

*Major Kennion to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Birjand, September 21, 1908.*

FOLLOWING addressed to Tehran, No. 103, dated the 21st September:—

"Shaukat has received orders from Minister of the Interior dismissing him, and intimating Hashmat-ul-Mulk's appointment. No reason for Shaukat's dismissal has been assigned. Hashmat-ul-Mulk is starting immediately. Mir Masum has received orders to come with troops."

"Is it possible to do anything now? Shaukat's Agent is still trying."

"In addition to effects mentioned in my telegram No. 95, Shaukat's fall will be directly attributed by his supporters and by himself to his having relied on the assistance of the Legation and having acted on my advice."

[35865]

No. 43.

*Messrs. Ziegler and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received October 16.)*

Sir,

*Manchester, October 15, 1908.*

WE are extremely obliged for your communication of yesterday's date and we shall at once pass it on to our friends in Tabreez, who, under prevailing conditions, are naturally living in a state of great anxiety.

As we pointed out in ours of the 29th ultimo, it is quite clear that the opinion continues to gain ground among the Persians that claims for losses on the part of Russian subjects are receiving more consideration than similar claims on the part of British subjects. In view of this, may we request you to inform us whether we shall be correct in telling our friends that no such preferential treatment will be given, but that the subjects of both nations will fare alike in this matter?

Deeply sensible of the consideration which we have received at your hands, we remain, &c.

(Signed) PH. ZIEGLER AND Co.

[35885]

No. 44.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 16.)*

(No. 338.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 16, 1908.*

COSSACK force for Tabreez. Your telegram No. 286 of the 14th instant.

I am informed by M. de Hartwig that the Cossacks who have gone to Tabreez have no Russian officers with them, but that it is likely that Captain Uchakow and possibly others will leave next week, travelling north slowly so that they may be within easy distance of Tabreez in order to prevent pillage after the cessation of the fighting. His Excellency said that they would not take part in the fighting under any circumstances.

I told his Excellency that we had been informed by the Russian Government that the Russian officers were to stay in Tehran. M. de Hartwig replied that as he did not know the exact date of Uchakow's departure, he had not yet informed his Government of his leaving.

[35886]

No. 45.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 16.)*

(No. 339.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 16, 1908.*

SHAH and Constitution and Tabreez situation.

On the 14th instant, the Acting Consul-General reported that the head-quarters of the Royalist party in the town had been burnt and looted and many shops pillaged in the Bazaar.

[1622]

H



On Wednesday M. de Hartwig and I made as arranged identic communications to the Minister for Foreign Affairs (see my telegram No. 334 of the 11th instant), and his Highness promised to repeat our language to the Shah, and added that the Electoral Law was ready though, as regards its nature, I could elicit nothing from him.

I gather from M. de Hartwig, who seems to possess a good deal of information about it, that it is framed so as to secure for the Medjliss men of moderate views. His Excellency is confident that it will be published in a few days.

[36066]

No. 46.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 17.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 9th instant, relative to British interests in the Persian Gulf.

A letter on the subject will follow.

*India Office, October 17, 1908.*

Inclosure in No. 46.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*October 9, 1908.*

SITUATION in the Persian Gulf. Please refer to your telegram of the 9th ultimo, asking for our views on the proposals in the letter of 6th June from Major Cox. We concur in the view expressed in letter of 14th July from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran that a visit to Tehran on the part of Major Cox might be advantageous.

With regard to the question of the Consular representation of the Russian Government, a despatch on our own Consular establishments in Persia is being sent to you, in which we have not found ourselves able to suggest that any reduction should be made. Suggestion that Bunder Abbas Consulate should be relinquished by Russia does not, therefore, seem to us desirable. It would, no doubt, be desirable that M. Ovseenko should be transferred, but it would perhaps be unwise to press this just now, in view of statement by Mr. Marling as to the high esteem in which the Russian Consul at Bunder Abbas is held by M. Hartwig. We support proposal of Mr. Marling and Major Cox for Vice-Consulate at Lingah, in view of efforts of Germany, half the cost being borne by Indian revenues. In the first instance the appointment might be limited to three years.

With regard to the question of policing the trade routes, a proposal for utilizing sowars was made in our despatch of the 15th March, 1906. Views of His Majesty's Government on this proposal have not yet reached us. We doubt if it is practicable, under the changed conditions, to take action without interfering with Persian independence and integrity.

As to the question of a radical change in the Customs, His Majesty's Government are better judges than we of what the attitude of the European Powers concerned would be. If an opening for interference and suggestion of international control could be given to Germany by the raising of this question, it would probably be preferable that things should be left alone pending the treatment, in connection with a loan or bankruptcy, of the whole financial position of Persia.

If present conditions continue, we agree with Major Cox that three subsidized ships in the Gulf will be insufficient; but until the results of the Arms Conference are made known this question might stand over.

Our views on the question of extension of cable communication were stated in our telegram of 21st September.

Further representations from Major Cox are still awaited with regard to arrangements on Trucial Coast.

We desire to make it clear, in recording our opinions, that they are formed with reference to the present state of finances and politics of Persia, and in view of the fact

that the bringing about of substantial reforms appears to be hopeless. As developments in Persia are being closely watched by the Afghans, it is also important that, for the present, no action should be taken by which the *status quo* would be materially altered in Persia.

[36089]

No. 47.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 17.)*

(No. 340.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 17, 1908.*

COSSACK force for Tabreez.

I am very confidentially informed by M. de Hartwig that the Russian Government have decided to increase the escort of the Russian Consulate-General at Tabreez in consequence of the recent outrages on the Julfa-Tabreez road.

[36444]

No. 48.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 510.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 17, 1908.*

SITUATION at Tabreez.

I have been informed that two companies of Russian infantry and 100 Russian Cossacks are on their way to Tabreez from Julfa.

This news, which follows directly upon that of the defeat of the Royalist troops and the cessation of fighting, will be looked upon as proof that the Russians are determined to crush the Nationalists, and to establish the authority of the Shah at Tabreez. It will cause a very bad impression here, and will nullify the excellent effect that the visit of the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs produced on public opinion, for it is entirely incompatible with a policy of non-intervention.

Would it not be possible to induce the Russian Government to leave the Persians to settle their own affairs? This would be quite justifiable, seeing that no satisfaction on the subject of the Constitution has been as yet given by the Shah.

[36086]

No. 49.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 18.)*

(No. 209.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 17, 1908.*

I LEARNED to-day from M. Tcharykoff that a decision to reinforce the Consular guard at Tabreez by two companies of infantry and eighty Cossacks was taken last evening by the Cabinet Council. It has been decided to take this step in consequence of the fact that a Russian post station on the Julfa-Tabreez road has been destroyed, a Russian inspector there having a bare escape for his life, and being rescued by one of the followers of Sattar Khan; another reason for the step is that Sattar Khan refuses to guarantee that the Russians in Tabreez are any longer safe. The destruction of the post station was, it appears, the work both of the Shah's men and of the Nationalists. The Royalist troops had, according to M. Tcharykoff, been completely defeated. He added that the Firman Firma was no better than Ain-ed-Dowleh, and that the Royalist troops and Sattar Khan's men, who were in large part Caucasian revolutionaries of Tartar origin, were equal in point of badness.

I will, as M. Tcharykoff has telegraphed to Count Benckendorff, await instructions as to whether to say anything regarding the grave step which the Russian Government are taking. I imagine, however, that it would be difficult to induce them to refrain from it, seeing that it was adopted after a Cabinet Council.



[36087]

No. 50.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 18.)*

(No. 210.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 18, 1908.*

RUSSIAN Cossacks for Tabreez. Your telegram No. 510 of the 17th instant. M. Tcharykoff, with whom I had to-day a long conversation, read me out various telegrams which had been exchanged between him and M. de Hartwig. The looting and destruction of Russian property at the post station were, so his Excellency explained to me, the work of the anti-Royalists, and not, as I had understood yesterday, the combined work of them and of the Shah's forces. The lives of the Russian subjects in Tabreez were, he asserted, in peril, as were also the Russian institutions established there—the Consulate, bank, &c., and there was at present at Tabreez no proper security. The force to be sent was the minimum possible, he added. Proclamations would be issued everywhere, on its departure from Zulfa, that it was on its way to Tabreez simply with the object of giving protection to Russian subjects and institutions, should it be required. M. Tcharykoff said that most stringent instructions would be issued that the force was to undertake no kind of interference in Persian internal affairs; as soon as some guarantee was afforded that security existed, it would be recalled.

M. Tcharykoff assured me most categorically, when I spoke to him in the sense of your above-mentioned telegram, that, if the objects of the step taken by the Government were regarded in such a manner, these views were entirely opposed to the facts of the case. It was impossible for the Russian Government to wait till the murder of some Russians had occurred, and much more serious measures would have to be taken if such an event as that took place. His Excellency asserted that the measures now being taken by the Russian Government were simply precautionary in character, and he added that he felt sure that in the event of a like case arising in the south of Persia the same measures would be adopted in similar circumstances by His Majesty's Government. Not the slightest desire nor intention existed on the part of the Russian Government to intervene in Persian internal matters; it was indifferent to them by whom security at Tabreez was established, as long as it was established. The idea of their wanting to re-establish the authority of the Shah or crush the Nationalist party was out of the question. I told his Excellency that I did not give these views as the opinions of His Majesty's Government, but I said that they might be held in many quarters in England. M. Tcharykoff replied that he earnestly hoped that His Majesty's Government would do all in their power to remove misconceptions of this nature, and to represent in its real and true light the step taken by the Russian Government as being a reinforcement of the Consular guards for the protection in a time of danger of Russian subjects and institutions. There were, his Excellency added, from 300 to 500 revolutionaries from the Caucasus in Sultan Khan's force, and great mischief was caused by them. In reply to my inquiry as to why they were not kept at home by the Russian authorities, his Excellency said that to guard a long and mountainous frontier was an impossibility. The limited object of the dispatch of the force, as well as the fact that there is no intention to intervene or interfere in Persian internal affairs, will be announced here in the "Official Gazette." His Excellency gave an affirmative reply to my question as to whether his Consul-General at Tabreez really held the danger to be serious and imminent. To induce the Russian Government to revise their decision would, I think, be impossible. They seem convinced that they would incur grave responsibility if they ignored the danger, of the existence of which they appear sure.

[36372]

No. 51.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 19.)*

Sir,

*India Office, October 12, 1908.*

IN reply to your letter of the 10th instant, I am directed to say that Viscount Morley concurs with the views and language of the Memorandum which Sir E. Grey proposes to communicate to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of railway construction in Persia.

I am, &amp;c.

(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

[36379]

No. 52.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 19.)*

(No. 212.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 19, 1908.*

PERSIAN finances.

Your despatch No. 311 of the 9th instant.

As the Russian Government consider that the question of Persian finances is connected with that of railways in that country, I would suggest that I should communicate to them some extracts from Mr. Marling's despatch when the discussions as to the railways are reopened.

[36381]

No. 53.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 19.)*

(No. 341.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 19, 1908.*

HIS Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Tabreez reports that the police is being reorganized and that the bazaar will probably be opened before the end of the month. The inhabitants are, at the same time, storing grain for a siege, and making great preparations to resist the reinforcements.

[36087]

No. 54.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 521.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 19, 1908.*

TABREEZ disturbances. Please see your telegram No. 210 of the 18th instant dealing with the precautions taken by Russian Government.

I am of opinion that the various Russians in official positions in Persia, including M. de Hartwig, consider that they are under an obligation to uphold the Shah's cause against the National party, and have thought fit to ask that Russian troops should be sent in consequence of the recent victory of the Nationalists over the Royalist forces at Tabreez. The Russian troops could hardly avoid an encounter with the Nationalists, and if successful they will increase Shah's favour towards M. de Hartwig; whereas if the Nationalists defeat them, Hartwig will have an excuse for asking for more troops.

I neither wish to hamper nor to weaken the influence of Russia in North Persia. I am not jealous of it. I desire nothing more than that they should employ their power so as to avoid any step to which the British public would object—such as going so far in support of the unconstitutional régime of the Shah as to give him armed assistance for suppressing revolts, a course which would show that the Russian Government do not care how worthless a system of government exists in Persia. So far, I have done all I could to uphold the Russian Government in the matter of the dispersion of the Medjliss by General Liakhoff, and it will be much to be regretted if Hartwig or any local officer is permitted by the Russian Government to act in their name in Persia in a way which public opinion here would disapprove of. Russia would lose far more by my having to declare, however little definite reason I might claim for doing so, that I was unable to defend her action there than she would gain by any small advance achieved by Hartwig with the Shah.

The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs has made it plain to me that what I considered to have been the views held by M. de Hartwig are in reality quite alien to what his Government actually want. I do not dispute the fact that they dispatched these troops for the purpose indicated by you in your telegram above referred to, but I cannot view with confidence the way in which the force will be used by the officials in Persia, and as I think serious consequences might very probably arise from this, I am sending this telegram. I leave it to you what use you make of it.

[1622]



[36538]

No. 55.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 20.)*

(No. 213.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 20, 1908.*

TABREEZ. Your telegram No. 521 of the 19th instant.

M. Tcharykoff, whom I saw this afternoon, told me that the detachment for reinforcing the Consular guard at Tabreez would not leave Julfa, as the news from the first-named place was better, and as some order seemed to be in course of being established. The above had been telegraphed to the Russian Minister at Tehran, and he had been also informed that, unless the Russian Consul-General at Tabreez called for the force, it would remain in Russian territory. The Consul-General had been instructed that, unless he was convinced that the lives of Russian subjects or of other Europeans were in imminent danger, he was not to call for the detachment. In replying to my inquiry as to whether the Consul-General could, without previous reference to St. Petersburg, call for the detachment, his Excellency said that he could do so, as the matter would clearly be urgent if he made the call. Questioned by me as to whether the Consul-General was sober-minded and not prone to nervousness, M. Tcharykoff replied that he was quite trustworthy, being a most cautious and somewhat elderly man. The news that the departure of the detachment had been stopped was, I told his Excellency, an immense relief to me, and would, I felt sure, be a source of equal gratification to you. Some other observations which I made can be reported by the messenger leaving on the 22nd.

[36539]

No. 56.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 20.)*

(No. 214.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 20, 1908.*

I LEARN from M. Tcharykoff that the newly-appointed Russian First Secretary at Tehran will leave at once for his post, and that M. de Hartwig will come away on leave as soon as he arrives. His Excellency added that he could inform me in strict confidence that M. de Hartwig would not return there.

Above is confidential.

[36474]

No. 57.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 20.)*

(No. 342.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 20, 1908.*

INCREASE of Russian Consular guard at Tabreez.

According to a report dated to-day which I have received from His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Tabreez, 148 Russian Cossacks, with arms and ammunition, have crossed the frontier at Julfa.

[36525]

No. 58.

*Consul Wratishaw to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 20.)*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tabreez, October 20, 1908.*

YOUR telegram of the 19th ultimo reached me here (Urumia) to-day, the 11th instant. Some time ago evacuation began, but appears now to have stopped.

At present in all the districts which had been hitherto occupied there remains Turkish troops in reduced numbers.

[36379]

No. 59.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 526.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 20, 1908.*

RAILWAYS in Persia.

I concur in suggestion in your telegram No. 212 of the 19th instant, and the next messenger will bring you a further despatch containing instructions.

[36578]

No. 60.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 528.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 20, 1908.*

RECENT disturbances at Tabreez.

I hear from Count Benckendorff that the Russian force has been ordered to stay at Julfa, on the frontier line, as a consequence of the opinion which I expressed on the subject, as well as of the fact that Tabreez is at present quiet, while police measures are being taken by Sato Khan for the protection of the inhabitants. You should acquaint the Government to which you are accredited with my great appreciation of its readiness in listening to my representations, and say how greatly I am pleased by its action. You will understand from the telegram which you received yesterday from me why I consider this matter to be so important.

[36598]

No. 61.

*Persian Transport Company to Foreign Office.—(Received October 21.)*

3, Salter's Hall Court, Cannon Street, London,  
October 19, 1908.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to reply to your letter of the 14th ultimo relative to the proposed repairs to the Godar Bridge on the Ahwaz-Ispahan road.

After the dispatch of our letter to you of the 13th March last, our road engineer, Mr. Sotham, returned from Persia, and his advice was taken as to the advisability of carrying out the simple repairs suggested by the mechanical engineer, Mr. Barlow, who had reported on the bridge in 1907. Mr. Sotham was of the opinion that expert advice should be taken in London as to the best course to be adopted. Accordingly the whole of the information at our disposal was placed before Mr. Howard Humphreys, a consulting engineer, in consultation with Mr. Sotham. These gentlemen expressed their opinion that certain structural alterations were in all probability required, but that they could make no statement of the absolute necessity for such structural alterations unless supported by advice given by an engineer on the spot, that is to say, of an engineer who had actually visited the bridge. As the structural alterations would have meant an expenditure largely exceeding the estimate given by our agent to His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, the directors of this Company were of opinion that they should not be urged on the Bakhtiari Chiefs before the opinion of the expert at home was confirmed or otherwise by a qualified engineer on the spot.

Mr. Barlow has no such qualifications, and as Mr. Sotham was returning to Persia, my directors suggested to the Foreign Office that it would be in the interests of the parties concerned—that is, of the Chiefs—to dispatch Mr. Sotham via the Persian Gulf in order that he might visit the bridge *en route*. This could have been done at a small additional cost, and would probably have been the means of saving the Chiefs heavy future expenditure. The action which followed the return of Mr. Sotham to England and the discussions with the expert in London took time, and it was only on the 24th August last that we were in a position to inform His Majesty's Government of the changed aspect of the case. This was unfortunate, because in the meantime, at the instance of His Majesty's Government, after the receipt of our letter of the 13th March last, His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires in Tehran had obtained the consent of the Chiefs to the expenditure of the small sum (1,000 tomans) required for the repairs suggested by Mr. Barlow. The situation naturally became very complicated, for His Majesty's Government were quite naturally averse to reopening the question



with the Chiefs, who might think we were acting in bad faith; and, on the other side, my directors felt that to carry out the repairs suggested by Mr. Barlow—repairs which in all probability are perfectly useless—would involve them in more than a doubtful transaction. If the advice of our London expert is correct, the Chiefs would be expending 1,000 tomans to no purpose, and would be forced at an early date to undertake the structural repairs of which they have no knowledge at present. They would certainly complain to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires that our repairs have been made to no purpose, and would want to know why they were faced with further heavier expenditure so soon after the 1,000 tomans of which His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires had spoken, and which he had stated (on the word of our local agent) to be sufficient.

The time has gone by for Mr. Sotham to proceed via the Persian Gulf, and we have dispatched him via the Black Sea route to resume his duties at Tehran.

My directors feel that in communicating the reports received by them as to the present condition of the bridge—in reminding the Chiefs of the serious loss of revenue they may suffer in the event of the bridge collapsing—and in offering their opinion as to the best means of dealing with the matter, they have acted in the best interests of the Chiefs. It now lies with the Chiefs to decide what is to be done. Our agent at Ahwaz will furnish His Majesty's Vice-Consul there with copies of the expert Reports, of which we attach hereto a précis. We trust that His Majesty's Vice-Consul may find opportunity to give the Chiefs his advice as to the best course for them to adopt.

We will endeavour, if desired, to spare Mr. Sotham some time next spring for an inspection, but we will charge adequate remuneration for any such services rendered to the Chiefs. We think they ought to come to some arrangement with us of a permanent nature for the use of our engineers.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) H. W. MACLEAN, *Secretary*.

Inclosure in No. 61.

*Brief Outline of the Opinion of the Consulting Engineer in London regarding the Godar Bridge.*

THE Consulting Engineer after an examination of the reports and sketches of Mr. Barlow, the Company's mechanical engineer, was of the opinion that the defects in question constitute a grave danger to the Godar Bridge. He concluded that the chief cause of the trouble is that the existing provision for contraction and expansion of the metal under the great range of temperature to which it is subjected is inappropriate for a bridge which can only receive occasional attention, and recommended certain structural alterations which would remove the strain on the piers. He intimated that the carrying out of the temporary repairs suggested by Mr. Barlow would probably result in the transference of the strain to another part of the pier, and consequent damage to another part of the structure. In short, that the temporary repairs might not only be useless, but positively dangerous. Both he and our own engineer, Mr. Sotham, were agreed that the bridge should be examined on the spot by a capable engineer before proceeding further in the matter.

[36634]

No. 62.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 21.)*

(No. 217.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 21, 1908.*

M. TCHARYKOFF writes to me with reference to the report from Tabreez of 148 Cossacks having crossed the frontier, that he is absolutely sure that no Cossacks can have done so; he adds that one sotnia of Cossacks, consisting of 180 men, is at Julfa, but the Minister of War's orders are positive that, unless the Consul-General should require them to cross the frontier, they are not to do so, and unless the lives of Russians or of other Europeans are in imminent danger (which is not the case) the Consul-General cannot make the demand. M. Tcharykoff would like some control of the report from Tabreez to be obtained.

[36634]

No. 63.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 21.)*

(No. 218.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 21, 1908.*

TABREEZ. My telegram No. 217 of yesterday.

M. Tcharykoff wrote me another letter late last night, which I received early this morning, to the effect that the Minister of War had no information of Russian Cossacks having crossed the frontier, and that he had immediately telegraphed to Tiflis to inquire whether the report had any foundation. The orders that the detachment was not to leave Julfa were sent from here late in the night of the 19th instant. M. Tcharykoff says he still thinks that the report of the Cossacks having begun their march across the frontier is to be traced to the fact that they arrived at Julfa in marching order the day before. He adds that Sattar Khan and his followers cannot possibly mistake the arrival of the sotnia of Cossacks for a hostile act directed against them, for the detachment would not be able to cross the frontier before the inhabitants along the whole road from Julfa to Tabreez would have learnt of its advent from the Consul-General, and of the object of its mission, viz., to reinforce the Consular Guard and to protect Russian subjects, or before the Consul-General had requested Sattar Khan to assist the sotnia on its march and arrival at Tabreez.

Any further news he may get he has promised to let me have.

[36615]

No. 64.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 21.)*

(No. 343.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 21, 1908.*

SITUATION in Tabreez.

The copy of a long telegram respectfully addressed to the Shah by the leading merchants of Tabreez has been sent to me and the Turkish Embassy; the Russian, French, Austro-Hungarian, and German Legations have also received copies. It is stated in this telegram that the loyal population of the city has been fighting against traitors who acted without authorization in the Shah's name, and that they have not fought against the Royal authority. Having now expelled these traitors and normal conditions having been re-established, they hoped that the Constitutional benefits accorded by the recent Rescript would not be withheld from Tabreez.

Copies of telegrams, addressed by the Persian colonies at Baku and Tiflis to the Shah, in which the immediate summoning of the Medjliss is urged, have also been forwarded to me.

[36616]

No. 65.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 21.)*

No. 344.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 21, 1908.*

PERSIAN Cossack reinforcements for Tabreez.

M. de Hartwig has informed me that Captain Ouchakow has left the capital and has joined the Cossacks at Kasvin. His Excellency added that until the struggle was over Captain Ouchakow would not enter Tabreez.

Probably Ain-ed-Dowleh will be restored to the Governorship, as Firman Firma has refused to take up his post.

[36615]

No. 66.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 532.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 21, 1908.*

PERSIA.

See Sir G. Barclay's telegram of the 2nd instant.

It seems desirable that you should consult with the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs on the question whether the present would be a favourable moment for a

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joint representation on the part of the British and Russian Ministers at Tehran, to be addressed to the Shah in favour of the liberation of Tabreez from the disability imposed on her, and of constitutional government. This would appear to be the best means of insuring tranquillity in Tabreez, where Russian commercial interests are so important. It should, however, be clearly established by you that, in view of the considerate attitude shown by Russia in detaining the force which was intended for Tabreez, I should be averse to insisting on any action in Persia at a time which is considered inopportune by the Russian Government.

[36742]

No. 67.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 22.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 20th instant, relative to oxide Mining Concessions on islands in the Persian Gulf.

*India Office, October 20, 1908.*

Inclosure in No. 67.

*Viscount Morley to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*India Office, October 20, 1908.*

INQUIRY has been received from Strick and Co., who wish to obtain Mining Concessions for oxide on Nabiya Farur, Sirri, and Little Tamb, and on other islands not expressly specified, as to the procedure they should follow to this end.

As regards the last, it is proposed to give support to their application, and to say that negotiations should be conducted through medium of the Resident in Persian Gulf with the Sheikh of Shargah.

They will be informed as regards Sirri of the instructions issued by Foreign Office to Legation at Tehran in telegram of the 19th ultimo.

As regards Nabiya Farur, what are the views of your Government? Presumably Nabiya Farur and most of the other islands in the neighbourhood are Persian. Strick says they are under the Governor of Lingah.

[36731]

No. 68.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 22.)*

(No. 345.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 22, 1908.*

CONCESSION for Sirri red oxide.

The draft of a Concession has been submitted to me by the agent of the Manchester Company, who is about to apply to the Persian Government for it. Some of the conditions—one, for instance, respecting a 12 per cent. royalty on net profits—involve an admission of Persian sovereignty.

Our approval of these conditions would prejudice the Jowasmi claim if we make the communication to the Persian Government as indicated in the first paragraph of Mr. Marling's telegram No. 315 of the 21st September last. If, on the other hand, we reject them, the Company's chance of obtaining the Concession would be jeopardized.

With your approval I propose, therefore, to substitute the following words: "It must be clearly understood that such conditions as may be attached to the Concession shall not prejudice the question of the disputed status of the island," in place of the amendment which Mr. Marling suggests.

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No. 69.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 22.)*

(No. 346.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 22, 1908.*

RUSSIAN officers for Tabreez.

My telegram No. 344 of the 21st instant.

I am informed by M. de Hartwig that Captain Ouchakoff has been ordered to return to Tehran from Kasvin.

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No. 70.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 294.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 22, 1908.*

SIR A. NICOLSON'S telegrams Nos. 217 and 218 of the 21st instant.

Instruct Consul-General at Tabreez to telegraph on what authority he based the statement respecting Russian troops which you reported in your telegram No. 342 of the 20th instant.

[35865]

No. 71.

*Foreign Office to Messrs. Ziegler and Co.*

Gentlemen,

*Foreign Office, October 22, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, respecting the protection of British subjects at Tabreez.

I am to inform you in reply that whatever the Persian Government should admit in the case of Russian claims for losses would, of course, be claimed by His Majesty's Government on behalf of British subjects, who would, in such cases, be entitled both to most-favoured-nation as well as to national treatment.

His Majesty's Government have, however, no reason to suppose that claims for losses on the part of Russian subjects are receiving more consideration at the hands of the Persian Government than are those of British subjects, and in the event of such preferential treatment being accorded to Russian claimants, His Majesty's Government would certainly make a representation to the Government of Persia on the subject.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[36797]

No. 72.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 23.)*

Sir,

*India Office, October 22, 1908.*

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 14th instant, inclosing copy of a letter from the Treasury as to the proposed permanent appointment of a Military Attaché at Meshed. The Lords Commissioners inquire, with reference to the present position of the general question of the scale of expenditure in Persia, as to which they have not yet received a full expression of the views of the Secretary of State, whether the post of Vice-Consul at Meshed could not be abolished on the appointment of a Military Attaché.

The position of the Consul-General and Vice-Consul at Meshed is stated in paragraph 5 of my letter of the 8th July last.

As regards the general question of the scale of expenditure, I am to refer to the telegram from the Viceroy of the 9th instant stating that the Government of India are sending a despatch on the subject of the Consular establishments maintained by them, but that they do not see their way to suggest a reduction. Lord Morley concurs entirely with the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury as to the importance of restricting the expenditure on these establishments, and will give the subject his fullest



consideration, in consultation with Sir E. Grey, on the receipt of the despatch promised by the Government of India.

In the meantime, as inconvenience is caused by the strictly temporary footing on which the appointment is at present being continued, Lord Morley trusts that Sir E. Grey will obtain the consent of the Lords Commissioners to the proposal made in my letter of the 17th March last, and that the appointment of Military Attaché at Meshed should be sanctioned, at the joint charge of the Indian and British Exchequers, for a period of, say, two years, the question of continuing the appointment being considered at the end of that period.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[36798]

No. 73.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 23.)*

Sir, *India Office, October 22, 1908.*  
WITH reference to your letter, dated the 9th instant, regarding the measures taken for the protection of the Oil Concessions Syndicate's works in the neighbourhood of Ahwaz, I am directed to inform you that Viscount Morley concurs in the proposal of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to consult the Syndicate as to the retention of the present guard, and to inform them that, if they consider this necessary, they will be expected to bear the cost of providing the quarters that will be required for the detachment.

Lord Morley assumes that the cost of maintaining the escort will continue, as heretofore, to be divided equally between the Indian and Imperial Exchequers.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[36810]

No. 74.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 23.)*

(No. 219.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburg, October 23, 1908.*

PERSIA. Constitution and elections. Your telegram No. 532 of 21st instant. M. Tcharykoff concurs in proposal that further representations should now be addressed to Shah on this subject and on extension to Tabreez of Electoral Law, &c. Form and mode of representations should, he suggests, be arranged in concert by British and Russian Representatives.

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No. 75.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 23.)*

(No. 220.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburg, October 23, 1908.*

TABREEZ. Reported advance of Russian troops across Persian frontier. I was informed last night by M. Tcharykoff that it was proved by positive information from the Commander-in-chief at Tiflis that no Russian Cossacks had crossed frontier at Julfa. Much unnecessary trouble had been caused by the news of the Acting Consul-General at Tabreez as to the movements of the Cossacks, which now proved to be without foundation, and M. Tcharykoff hoped that he would receive an admonition to be more careful in future.

Stringent instructions had, his Excellency added, again been dispatched to the effect that no Cossack officers were to leave Tehran, and that Colonel Ouchakoff, who had already left that capital, had been ordered to return immediately.

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No. 76.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 297.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, October 23, 1908.*  
CONSTITUTION in Persia.  
Please refer to Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 219 and your telegram No. 343.  
I authorize you to act as proposed, working in conjunction with M. Hartwig.

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No. 77.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 536.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, October 23, 1908.*  
CONSTITUTION in Persia.  
I have received your telegram No. 219, and in consequence have sent instructions to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran.  
Russian Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs should be informed of this.

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No. 78.

*Board of Trade to Foreign Office.—(Received October 24.)*

Dear Maxwell, *Board of Trade, October 23, 1908.*  
THANK you for your note of the 22nd. In accordance with your suggestion I have sent the letter to Strick in an informal way, and I inclose a copy of the precise terms. Strick and Ellinger are corrupting my morals very considerably.

Yours, &c.  
(Signed) ARTHUR WILSON FOX.

Inclosure in No. 78.

*Mr. Wilson Fox to Mr. Strick.*

Dear Mr. Strick, *October 23, 1908.*  
WHEN you were last here you spoke to me about a letter which you had written to the Foreign Office, dated 7th October last, relating to iron oxide in the Persian Gulf. I have ascertained that the Concession to extract red oxide from the Island of Sirri may have to be given to a Persian subject, and it is understood that a Company entitled Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Son (Limited), of 111, Portland Street, Manchester, are contemplating, if they have not yet actually made, an application to the Persian Government for a Concession in Sirri.

In these circumstances, you may possibly think it desirable to make an application yourself to the Persian Government or to communicate with the Persian firm in question, with a view to coming to some arrangement with them.

As regards Tanb, Nabyu Farur, &c., about which you ask, the information we have shows, as far as it goes, that Tanb belongs to Shargah, the latter and the islands adjacent to Persia. The Government of India have been consulted on the subject by telegraph, and I will let you know the result when their answer is received. There will not, I anticipate, be any difficulty about your submitting an application for Concessions on islands belonging to Shargah through the Resident at Bushire. But as regards the islands belonging to Persia, there is the difficulty that at present the Persian Government objects, on principle, to giving Concessions to any but Persian subjects.

Yours, &c.  
(Signed) ARTHUR WILSON FOX.



[37008]

No. 79.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 24.)*

(No. 221.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 24, 1908.*

I AM informed by M. Tcharykoff that M. de Hartwig has received instructions to the effect that no direct appeal for assistance to the Russian troops at Julfa is to be made either by him or by the Russian Consul at Tabreez, but that, should the lives of Russian subjects be in any danger, the Russian Government is to be informed, and such orders as may appear expedient will be issued by the latter. It seems preferable, in M. Tcharykoff's opinion, that, in view of the improvement of the situation in Tabreez, control over the movements of the Russian troops should remain in the hands of the Russian Government. I said I quite concurred in the view that the decision as to whether assistance was necessary or not should rest with the Central Government, and not with their Agents in Persia.

On a former occasion I had made this suggestion to him, when he was, however, of opinion that reference to Six Powers might involve too much time, should matters become too pressing and the situation too critical.

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No. 80.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 24.)*

(No. 347.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 24, 1908.*

TABREEZ situation. Telegram No. 217 from St. Petersburg.

M. de Hartwig came to tell me yesterday evening that the present state of affairs at Tabreez was causing him great anxiety. His Excellency stated that he feared that, in the event of further hostilities, Sata Khan might hold the foreigners in the town as hostages, and thought that our nationals should be moved to some place of safety outside the town. He suggested asking our Consuls as to the desirability of this course.

In reply, I told M. de Hartwig that the town, according to all the information I had received, was quiet, and that I had no reason to think that further hostilities were imminent. I agreed, however, to ask Mr. Stevens for his opinion as to the danger to foreigners.

A telegram giving assurances of the goodwill of the Nationalists towards foreigners was sent by the Tabreez anjuman on Thursday to all the Legations.

(Very Confidential.)

Without wishing to read too much into M. de Hartwig's suggestion, I cannot help being a little anxious, in view of his alarmist attitude, as to the use which the Russian Consul-General may make of his discretionary powers to call in the Cossacks. These, according to M. de Hartwig, are, "en attendant que la situation s'éclaircisse," waiting on the frontier.

The dispatch of reinforcements has been talked of for some days, and it is possible that some Bakhtiari are *en route* for Tabreez. It is also said that preparations are being made for the dispatch of four regiments, but I am inclined to think that their importance is exaggerated by M. de Hartwig.

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No. 81.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 24.)*

(No. 348.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 24, 1908.*

SITUATION in Tabreez.

I have received a telegram from His Majesty's Acting Consul-General reporting that caravans on the Julfa road are being held up by Shouja Nizam, the commander of the Maraud cavalry, who was driven out of the town when the Royalist quarter surrendered.

I have addressed a note to the Persian Government holding them responsible for all losses arising from his action which may be sustained by British subjects.

[37020]

No. 82.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)*

(No. 224.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 25, 1908.*

PERSIA. M. Tcharykoff has been directed by the Emperor to point out to me that a telegram was sent by the "Times" correspondent, who he says is a Persian, and was a member of one of the Enjumens, to effect that Russian Colonel had left Tehran in command of the Persian Cossacks *en route* for Tabreez. The "Times" correspondent, on being informed by Sir G. Barclay that this news was not correct, merely altered it to statement that Colonel Ouchakoff had not yet left. M. Tcharykoff hopes, more especially now notice has been taken of them by the Emperor, that some means will be taken to prevent the dispatch of these misleading and "tendancieux" telegrams.

[37011]

No. 83.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)*

(No. 349.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 25, 1908.*

YESTERDAY the Tabreez Anjuman sent a telegram to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, copies of which were sent to most of the Legations, in which they protested against the Russian Cossacks entering Persian territory on the ground that throughout the struggle the rights of foreigners have been protected by the Nationalists, who have undertaken to do their utmost in the future to this end.

[37010]

No. 84.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)*

(No. 350.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 25, 1908.*

RUSSIAN troops for Tabreez. Your telegram No. 294 of the 22nd instant.

In reply to my inquiry, His Majesty's Acting Consul-General states that the Customs received orders from Tehran to allow Cossacks fully equipped to cross the frontier. He learnt this from a Customs official.

He afterwards heard that the troops had crossed the frontier. I am inquiring of him how he heard this, as he does not state the source of his information.

[37026]

No. 85.

*Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 261.)

Sir,

*Tehran, September 25, 1908.*

AT the audience which I had the honour to have on the 24th instant, the Shah asked me what news I had from Mr. Consul-General Wratislaw—of whom His Majesty spoke in the most flattering terms—as to the position of affairs in the neighbourhood of Urmia. In answer to the details which I gave of the evidences of the Turkish Government to withdraw its troops from what is unquestionably Persian territory, His Majesty showed a considerable knowledge of the question, and expressed with some warmth his thanks for the efforts made by the two mediating Powers to bring about an amicable solution. His Majesty went on to ask what I thought of the prospects of such an issue, and I replied that now that Izzet Pasha had disappeared from the scene I had every confidence that the Porte would be able to carry out its expressed friendly intentions. The Shah inquired what part Izzet Pasha had played at Constantinople, and as I thought a warning as to the possible fate of overpowerful Court favourites might not be misplaced, I recounted to His Majesty what had occurred to Izzet and to Fehim Pashas.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.



[37027]

No. 86.

*Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 262.)

Sir,

*Tehran, September 29, 1908.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 312 of the 19th instant, I have the honour to submit the following brief account of the unfortunate incident which occurred at the annual Gulahek race meeting, which took place on the 16th and 18th instant.

During the second race on the first day Captain Periebenostseff, who was riding for Colonel Liakhoff, tumbled from his horse, and as the accident appeared alarming enough three men of the Cossack Brigade were sent to the scene to inquire. Reassured as to the safety of their officer, the three men proceeded to enjoy a private race down the course, and one of these, who proved to be M. Ostrogradski's orderly, instead of leaving the course at the first safe point, attempted to gallop up an exit, the use of which by horses and carriages is specially prohibited in the interests of the safety of the public. He was naturally stopped by the Indian sowar posted at the spot by Major Stokes, who acted as Clerk of the Course. The evidence as to what happened between the Cossack and the sowar is conflicting. According to the Cossack account, the sowar used his stick—his only weapon—while, according to more independent testimony, he merely seized the Cossack's bridle. It is, however, undeniable that M. Ostrogradski's orderly drew his sword on an unarmed man, and that two other dismounted Cossacks joined their comrade in the attack on the sowar. This was the signal for a general assault on our six unarmed sowars by the seven or eight other Cossacks on the scene, who used their swords with the same freedom that they have been taught to enjoy when dealing with a Persian crowd, while our men defended themselves with stones. The Duffadar of the escort quickly called together his men, and Major Stokes, who was called to the scene a moment later, and found the men under absolute control, then went forward towards the Cossacks and ordered them back. He was at once attacked by Colonel Liakhoff's orderly, but evaded the two sword-cuts made at him.

It was immediately after this that Colonel Liakhoff himself arrived, and with some difficulty—he told me himself that he was obliged to threaten his orderly with his dagger—drove off his men. In the *mêlée* three of our men received slight injuries from sword-cuts in the hand, and one was only saved from a severe wound by his shoulder-chain. A copy of their depositions is inclosed herewith.

I did not myself see the beginning of the affair. I had noticed with some amusement the three Cossacks racing down the course, and it was only when I heard shouts and saw the glint of steel in the sun that I was aware of any untoward occurrence, and when I reached the scene, some 50 yards behind Colonel Liakhoff, the Commandant of the Cossack Brigade had succeeded in driving off his men, who, however, were obviously scarcely yet under control.

I told Colonel Liakhoff, who made no attempt whatever to justify his men for having used their swords against the unarmed men of the escort of a Legation on ground within the jurisdiction of that Legation, that I felt sure that I could leave it to him to mete out adequate punishment to them, but that I must request that he would take special note of the fact that one of his men—I did not then know that the culprit was the Colonel's personal orderly—had attacked Major Stokes. The man might, of course, have been unaware of Major Stokes' identity, as the latter was not in uniform, and I would not therefore insist on the special gravity of the assault having been committed on a member of His Majesty's Legation, but I thought that it was very necessary for the safety of all foreigners in Tehran to make a severe example in this case of any Persian soldier attacking a European. Colonel Liakhoff, whose natural reticence is increased by an inadequate command of French, though perfectly friendly, offered no expression of regret for the injuries of our sowars, but said merely that he should punish his men for taking the law into their own hands when one of them had been struck by the sowar, instead of reporting the matter to his Commanding Officer! He also denied that any assault had been made on Major Stokes, as he had not seen it himself. He arrived, I should explain, just after that incident occurred.

Colonel Liakhoff also made it a grievance that Major Stokes should have attempted to give orders to the Cossacks. I pointed out that in Gulahek, and as Clerk of the Course, Major Stokes was perfectly justified, indeed, could not have done less; and in reply to his request that the sowar who had, as he said, struck the

Cossack with a stick should be punished, promised to inquire into the facts and take whatever step seemed necessary.

Meeting him at dinner the same evening at the Dutch Legation, I urged the same views on him, and pointed out that unless he would satisfy my very moderate requirements I should have to make an official complaint to the Persian Government, a step which for every reason it was desirable to avoid. The Colonel showed himself no more ready to meet me half-way than in the afternoon; he again contended that, as he had not seen it, there had been no assault on Major Stokes, and he very illogically attempted to palliate the man's offence on the ground that he was a Seyyid and a Khan of standing at Kazvin. So unpromising was Colonel Liakhoff's attitude, that, having heard nothing from him during the next day, I called on the 18th instant on the Russian Minister, and asked him to use his influence with the Colonel to obviate a serious situation being created. I said that I had been painfully impressed by the omission on Colonel Liakhoff's part to express any regret for the injuries done to my escort, and that further I must insist that special notice should be taken of the fact, of which I had independent evidence, that one of the Cossacks had attempted to assault a European. I was very anxious to avoid any appearance of hostility between His Majesty's Legation and the Russian Colonel of the Cossack Brigade; but unless I obtained satisfaction on these points—and my demands were reduced to an absolute minimum—I must treat the question, without regard for Colonel Liakhoff, as one between the Persian Government and His Majesty's Legation. If he would reverse the positions and put himself in my place, he must, I was convinced, agree that moderation could go no further.

M. de Hartwig must have realized from the comments on the incident which reached his ears on the race-course that the conduct of the Cossacks was inexcusable, for he made but a half-hearted attempt to defend them, and assured me that Colonel Liakhoff's reputation as a disciplinarian was so well established that I need not be apprehensive that he would not inflict exemplary punishment on the offenders. He himself expressed great regret at the affair, but hoped that I would see that the sowar who had given the first provocation would be punished. I replied that it was not yet established that the sowar in the circumstances had exceeded his duty, and it seemed to me that a severe cut on the hand was in any case punishment enough.

As I was leaving the Russian Legation I received the letter, copy inclosed, in which Colonel Liakhoff informed me of the punishment inflicted on Major Stokes' assailant, not indeed for assault, but for abusive language, and expressing regret for the incident. After some hesitation—for I cannot say that I consider that the satisfaction given is adequate—I decided to accept Colonel Liakhoff's letter as closing the matter, and wrote a formal letter of thanks to him in that sense.

There is, I fear, little doubt that this affair was really the outcome of the animosity consequent upon the events in June and July. Colonel Liakhoff's action at that period proves that his desire to forward Russian local interests was stronger than his sense of the altered relations between Russia and Great Britain in Persian affairs. The sharp reminder which he has received on this point has probably left some soreness against us, and that soreness has not unnaturally infected his men, who, encouraged as they are to dragoon the native population of Tehran, were only too ready to pay off a fancied score against the Power which had brought down reproof on their Commanding Officer. It is probable also that disappointment at the failure of Colonel Liakhoff's horse caused a temporary irritation.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 86.

*Colonel Liakhoff to Mr. Marling.*

Votre Excellence,

*Persian Cavalry Barracks, le 18 Septembre, 1908.*

PAR suite de notre entretien à propos du triste accident qui a eu lieu aux courses le 16 du mois de Septembre, j'ai l'honneur de porter à la connaissance de votre Excellence que le vécile-raste coupable, nommé Schah Mourade, qui a tiré son sabre contre le détachement de la police placé au bord du champ du course, et qui, sans cacher son arme, s'est permis de parler sur un ton grossier à l'Attaché Militaire, Mr. Stokes, est dégradé par moi de son grade de vécile-raste avec privation des

[1622]

M



appointements joints à ce grade, et pour aggraver la punition est enfermé au cachot sombre pour dix jours avec diminution de nourriture.

Quant aux autres Cosaques qui ont pris part à la collision avec le détachement de la police, ils ont tous reçu leurs punitions selon mérite.

En témoignant à votre Excellence mes plus vifs regrets et mes excuses à propos de ce fait arrivé, je vous prie en même temps d'agréer l'assurance de ma parfaite estime ainsi que de mon dévouement le plus sincère.

(Signé)

Colonel LIAKHOFF.

Inclosure 2 in No. 86.

*Depositions of Sowars.*

SOWAR Hashim Ali Khan states:—

"A Cossack on a grey pony, who came with M. Ostrogradski, was riding on the course. I said, 'There will be a race shortly; come off the course.' The man then called me a 'Pider-sukhta.' I said, 'Come off the course.' He then drew his sword, whereupon I seized his pony's bridle. A second mounted Cossack came up from behind and struck me on the left arm with his sword [there is a bruise], while a third Cossack, a boy who is on duty at a house just outside the north-east gate of the Legation, struck me on the right knee with a dagger. He was on foot. The mounted man also struck me with his sword, but my shoulder chain saved me. A Persian came to my assistance and pulled away one man, but I was struck with a whip by one of the Cossacks, and another sword cut left a mark on my leather belt. The other sowars then came to my rescue. My turban was knocked off and stolen."

2. Sowar Niaz Ali Khan states:—

"I was standing where the carriages were stopped by the barrier. I saw Sowar Hashim Ali stop a Cossack on the course, when the latter drew his sword. Hashim Ali had hold of the pony's bridle. I thought the Cossack would come off the course and nothing more happen, but when I saw three other Cossacks, all with drawn swords, making for Hashim Ali, I ran to his rescue. Other Cossacks ran up with drawn swords, and I found myself fighting with three of them, and was unable to reach Hashim Ali. I received a sword cut on my left hand."

3. Sowar Munir Khan states:—

"I was standing near the tents on the Teppe when I saw Hashim Ali had been seized by two Cossacks. I went to his rescue and got him free. I received a sword cut on the left side of my face."

4. Sowar Nadir Khan states:—

"I was standing 10 yards farther away from the disturbances than Hashim Ali. I ran up and was attacked by the Cossack on the grey pony, with whom the disturbances started. He cut my left hand."

5. Duffadar Sher Mahomed Khan states:—

"I did not see the beginning of the disturbance. When I saw there was a disturbance I ran up and called to my men to stop fighting. I was struck by a sword on the back, and took up a stone and hit the Cossack, who struck me on the chest. I calculate that there were ten or twelve Cossacks with their swords drawn when I came on the scene."

6. Gholam Abbas Beg states:—

"I saw Hashim Ali trying to lead a Cossack's horse off the course. The Cossack abused Hashim Ali, who abused him in return. The Cossack drew his sword, and five or six other Cossacks started to help him. I ran to tell you [Major Stokes]. On my return I saw the Cossack who attacked you. His name is Shah Murad, and he is usually at Colonel Liakhoff's door. He usually goes with Colonel Liakhoff's carriage."

[37028]

No. 87.

*Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 263.)

Sir,

*Tehran, September 29, 1908.*

M. BIZOT called on me on the 25th instant and said that he had been summoned to the Shah's camp that morning and had been requested to find some means of raising a considerable sum of money, which was urgently required to pay and feed the troops at Tabreez. It was first pressed on him that he should try to obtain the advance of 400,000*l.* from Great Britain and Russia; but on his pointing out that the Persian Government had shown no intention whatever of fulfilling the conditions which the two Governments attach to the advance, and that therefore he could not recommend the proposal to the two Legations, the Prime Minister then inquired if M. Bizot could not assist the Government to raise money if he, Mushir-es-Sultaneh, pledged his jewels as security. M. Bizot said that he could not of course prevent the Minister from raising money in that manner, as a personal transaction, but that he must in every way discountenance any attempt of the Government to obtain funds indirectly by this means.

I told M. Bizot that I entirely concurred in his view that it was impossible to encourage the Persian Government to hope for any financial advance from the two Governments in present circumstances, and I thought it unlikely that either the Imperial Bank of Persia or the Banque de Prêts would lend money to Mushir-es-Sultaneh on the security of the jewels, knowing that the loan would eventually be transferred, under a "dastkhatt" of the Shah, to Government account. I agreed also in his view that the only way to put an end to the ruinous and crazy efforts of the Government to obtain money was to make its acquisition as difficult as possible, while letting it be understood that the sole hope of obtaining pecuniary assistance from the two Governments or the banks lies in accepting a reasonable measure of reform. The only danger that I saw in this course was that, if the screw should be turned too tight, the Shah's present reckless advisers might induce His Majesty to turn elsewhere, *e.g.*, to Germany, and obtain accommodation on extortionate terms.

The same afternoon M. Bizot consulted both the Russian Minister and the Russian Financial Agent, and, finding them both of the same opinion as himself, it was arranged, subject to my concurrence, that M. Bizot and M. Ostrogradsky should call on the Prime Minister the following day and tell his Excellency that so long as the existing régime in financial affairs continues the Government need not look for any assistance either from the Legations or the banks.

The two gentlemen fulfilled their mission at Bagh-i-Shah on the following day.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[37029]

No. 88.

*Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 264.)

Sir,

*Tehran, September 30, 1908.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 248 of the 10th September, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a note dated the 18th instant from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, embodying the Shah's "dastkhatt" in reply to the identic communication from the British and Russian Legations, advising His Majesty to take steps to convoke the Medjliss on the 14th November, and to let his intention to do so be known in Tabreez.

The long delay of ten days which the Shah allowed to elapse before replying may be attributed to two causes: firstly, that his entourage did not wish to see His Majesty commit himself to a definite promise to the two Powers which would put a term at an early date to the present régime of absolutism, so congenial and profitable to them; and, secondly, that the Russian Legation was at all events at first but half-hearted in urging compliance on His Majesty. There can be no question also but that the Shah himself views the reappearance of a popular Assembly with the greatest dislike and apprehension; but I am on the whole inclined to believe that he is convinced that sooner or later he must in his own interests fulfil his pledges, and that were he not so entirely under the influence of his reactionary courtiers, and had the full weight of Russian



influence been thrown into the balance against them, His Majesty would not have been so leisurely in replying. It is probable, too, that His Majesty has been deluded by the sanguine representations of Amir Bahadur Jang\* that the Nationalist movement in Tabreez could be crushed, and that he hoped that if he could gain a few days' delay he would be spared the humiliating appearance of being forced to grant the conditions demanded by the Constitutional party in that city.

The same causes are also responsible for the unsatisfactory nature of the reply when at last received, which is indeed scarcely distinguishable from a flat refusal to regard the advice of the two Powers. So unsatisfactory, indeed, was it that the Russian Minister felt impelled to send a message to the Shah insisting that His Majesty must take some immediate step to correct the bad impression which must be produced in London and St. Petersburg, and to avoid more insistent representations by the two Legations. On the 21st instant M. de Hartwig succeeded in obtaining a half-promise that the modified electoral law would be published on the 24th instant, and that the Medjliss would be convened on the 1st (14th) November, the date specified in the identic communication, and on the 22nd instant the Minister for Foreign Affairs called on me and referring to a private letter in which I had warned his Highness that the Shah's reply could not be well received by His Majesty's Government, asked me if the Shah's promised announcement commended itself to me. I told his Highness that I was convinced of the wisdom of the step as, I gather from a note I have received from him, was the Russian Minister also. Ala-es-Sultaneh then asked if I would be willing to discuss the political situation with the Shah, who, he said, was desirous of explaining his position to me. I said that considering that His Majesty had asked for my recall some two months ago it was strange that he should now be wishing to receive me, but that I was, of course, at His Majesty's orders, and an audience was accordingly arranged for the 24th.

The Shah received me in a small double tent open all round and with heavily embroidered velvet on the inner roof. After inquiring after my health His Majesty expressed his regret that he had not seen me for so long! His Majesty appeared to me to be in better health than I had ever seen him, and was as much at his ease in uttering the above polite fiction as the most practised of Persian courtiers. It was some little time, however, before His Majesty touched on political matters, and no sooner had I begun to urge on him the expediency in his own interest of following the advice tendered by the Governments of Great Britain and Russia, than he assured me that the Imperial Rescript containing the new electoral law and announcing an early date for the elections and the meeting of Parliament would be published the same day. I said I was rejoiced to hear His Majesty's wise decision, which could not fail to give the greatest satisfaction to His Majesty's Government. The Shah then went on to speak of the late Medjliss; he said that it was composed of ignorant and designing men whose aim had been to create trouble directed against himself; that they had been supported by the equally evil and interested Anjumens; that they had interfered in all kinds of questions quite outside their competency, and that he hoped that under the new electoral law a really useful Assembly would be created. I said that I ventured to differ from His Majesty on one point: the late Medjliss might have been ignorant and meddling, but I was convinced that it was sincere in its desire to better the condition of the country. The Medjliss could, of course, be improved on, and I hoped that the electoral law about to be published would accomplish that. At any rate, by convoking a new Parliament His Majesty would give the lie to those who pretended that he desired to abolish the Constitution and would put an end to the agitation which was distracting the country and paralyzing the Government. The origin of the cry for a Constitution has been the desire for good government, and now that His Majesty was about to give proof of his sincerity to maintain the Constitution, it behoved him to lead the way toward reform. The Shah, who had not much relished my assertions as to the good intentions of the late Medjliss, hastened to reply that he was firmly resolved to reorganize every Department of the Government, and intended to make a beginning with the Ministry of Finance, and would avail himself to the utmost of the services of the Financial Adviser, of whose ability and high character he had formed the most favourable opinion. I said that His Majesty could find no better counsellor than M. Bizot, but that, to judge from the opposition which he had hitherto encountered, he would find little assistance from the present Persian Government. It was of the first importance that His Majesty should be surrounded by Ministers animated with the same desire as himself to introduce reforms. I feared there could be no question that His Majesty's

\* Minister of War, who has done his utmost to impede the Ain-ed-Dowleh at Tabreez.—A. P.

present advisers were very far from being so disinterested as could be wished, and I hoped that others would be found to replace them. One of the reasons of the failure of the late Parliament had been the lack of strong and capable Ministers who would have explained its true functions to it and guided it in its earlier days; but, unfortunately, none were forthcoming, nor could I see that matters in this respect were much better now. Reform, therefore, depended entirely on His Majesty himself, and I hoped he would make good use of an opportunity which offered itself to few Rulers, and which, if once lost, might not recur. The Shah replied that he was quite alive to the necessity of loyal co-operation on the part of Ministers, and he would take care that his wishes should be carried out, while the new electoral law would insure the return of intelligent and moderate Deputies, who would not interfere with the work of reform.

The conversation then turned on other questions of a general character. The audience lasted about an hour and a-quarter.

When I reached the Legation I heard a report that a Rescript had actually been posted in the bazaar that morning, but on inquiry that rumour turned out to be unfounded. It seems, however, that some kind of announcement had been drafted, and even sent to be printed, but that its provisions were so unsatisfactory that the Shah had been advised to withdraw it. It is said that it fixed no date either for the elections or for the opening of the Medjliss; that it provided for a Senate and a Lower House; but that the electoral law for the formation of the latter body was so framed that the Deputies would have been practically nominees of the Court party, and would have no representative character whatever.

M. de Hartwig was very much annoyed at this result, for having no doubt by that time realized that his Government did not intend to allow their advice to be flouted, he had had to do his best to bring the Shah to adopt a reasonable course, but found that his influence over the Sovereign was less powerful than that of the Reactionaries. I saw his Excellency on Sunday, but was unable to get much information from him, though he assured me of what I knew before, namely, that a new Rescript was in course of preparation in which dates would be announced for the elections and for the opening of the Medjliss; the franchise and qualifications of Deputies, he believed, would be restricted somewhat, and no election would take place at Tabreez until order had been restored there. From other sources, however, I learn that the publication of all newspapers, and the formation of Anjumens is to be prohibited. Presumably also the state of martial law is to be continued. Since then it has transpired that in reality nothing was actually settled.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 88.

*Ala-es-Sultaneh to Mr. Marling.*

(Translation.)  
Sir,

September 18, 1908.

I HAVE submitted to the Shah your communication of the 8th instant, and, by His Majesty's command, I have to make to your Excellency the following communication:—

"As I have already promised the people and the Representatives of the two Governments to form a Medjliss which would suit the nature of the country, which would be in conformity with the religious laws and the holy Shah, and which would not again cause anarchy and trouble, we are now preparing the requirements of it. Now that they have written on the subject it is hoped that, at the time they have fixed, a Proclamation for the opening of the representative Medjliss will be issued, but, as it is written, this Medjliss will be after the restoration of order in Azerbaijan, when the Persian authorities can at their leisure arrange for the formation, convocation, and the opening of the Medjliss in question."

I had to trouble you with the above for your information.

I avail, &c.  
(Signed and sealed) MOHAMMED ALI ALA-ES-SULTANEH.



[37030]

No. 89.

*Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 265. Very Confidential.)

Sir,

*Tehran, September 30, 1908.*

I AM very reluctant to suggest that the Russian Minister does not always endeavour to carry out the instructions of his Government, but a review of his actions and words since the presentation of the identic communication inviting the Shah to take steps to convoke the Medjliss, and to publish at Tabreez his intention to do so, makes it difficult to arrive at any other conclusion; it is at all events unquestionable that the general belief in Tehran is that he is largely responsible for the Shah's very unsatisfactory attitude in respect to that communication.

As I have ventured to suggest in previous despatches, M. de Hartwig's policy appears to follow constantly the policy that, as Russia's only friend and indispensable instrument, the Shah must at all costs be maintained in a position of practical independence of popular control, while, in order to fortify Russian influence over him, the Shah must be taught to believe that in no circumstances will Russia allow any distasteful course of action to be forced on His Majesty, much less join in bringing pressure to bear on him. It is, I feel convinced, only with these limitations that M. de Hartwig can bring himself to give effect to the understanding between Great Britain and Russia to abstain so far as possible from interference in Persian internal affairs, and when interference becomes inevitable, to act in loyal co-operation.

In these circumstances the unexpected instructions from St. Petersburg to join with His Majesty's Legation in pressing the Shah to convoke Parliament, and to announce at Tabreez his intention to do so, must have been most disconcerting to M. de Hartwig. He was well aware how distasteful such advice must be to the Shah, and how severely His Majesty's faith in Russian assurances would be shaken. The instructions, however, could not be disregarded, but, while carrying them out to the letter, M. de Hartwig must have felt that, to save his influence with the Shah, he must take steps to prevent the advice of the two Powers from being too abruptly and inconveniently pressed home. To have formally sought an audience with the Shah so as to explain the change of front and reassure His Majesty would have been too flagrant while we were still awaiting a reply, and M. de Hartwig therefore elected the less obvious inconsistency of accepting an invitation to attend a review of the troops at Bagh-i-Shah sent him by Amir Bahadur Jang, whom, scarcely more than a month previously, he had roundly denounced to me as being the Shah's worst enemy, and with whom the Russian Legation would have no further dealings. A long interview with the Shah took place on this occasion, but I have no knowledge of what passed, except from M. de Hartwig's own account. When the Minister, with a great show of frankness, first informed me on the 14th instant of his visit to Bagh-i-Shah, he dwelt on such uninteresting topics as the new uniform and martial appearance of the troops, and said nothing of his conversation with the Shah, except as reported in my telegram No. 306 of the 14th September, that His Majesty would send a reply in a day or two, and that he was much annoyed that the identic communication should have become public. A few days later M. de Hartwig told me vaguely that he had given the Shah good advice, but I could not elicit any details of that advice.

Then, again, his action in reporting to St. Petersburg that the alleged copy of the identic communication circulated in the bazaars issued from this Legation would appear to have been actuated rather by a wish to find excuses for the Shah's delay in replying than by a desire to hasten a satisfactory answer. Presumably he represented to M. Isvolsky that the disclosure of the nature of the joint advice was, in the first place, displeasing to the Shah, and, in the second, calculated to encourage a renewal of the agitation for the recall of Parliament. The former contention is true enough; the Shah would undoubtedly share M. de Hartwig's aversion to having it known that His Majesty was being urged by Russia to revive the Medjliss. Such knowledge in the possession of the public would make it difficult for the Shah to disregard the advice. The latter argument, however, if the then existing circumstances are examined, will be found to be hollow. The three months within which the Shah had, by his Proclamation issued immediately after the *coup d'Etat* of the 23rd June, promised that the Medjliss should meet were to expire on the 20th September, but no step whatever had been taken by the Shah to make this possible, and, in the face of this fresh proof of His Majesty's insincerity, murmurs of discontent had already begun to make themselves

heard. Nothing would have been better calculated to still those murmurs than the knowledge that the Shah was being urged by Russia as well as Great Britain to redeem his pledges, for the Constitutionalists would have recognized that His Majesty could not have resisted the joint pressure; but nothing would have been more injurious to Russian influence with the Shah.

Be all this as it may, M. de Hartwig's attitude and conduct since the presentation of the identic communication to the Shah undeniably produced the conviction that the answer would be such as the Russian Legation might see fit to dictate, and the unsatisfactory nature of the reply, of which the tenor has of course become known, is quoted as proof positive that such was the case. This is, of course, an exaggeration. M. de Hartwig could never have suggested to the Shah the reply which His Majesty actually sent; he would have realized that the two Governments could not accept as satisfactory an answer which is tantamount to a refusal to be guided by their advice. For this, no doubt, the Shah's reactionary entourage is really responsible; but I should find it hard to believe that, had M. de Hartwig, at his audience on the 12th instant, given the Shah and Amir Bahadur Jang to understand clearly that the identic communication originated in St. Petersburg, and that the Russian Government was in earnest in recommending the convocation of Parliament and conciliatory measures at Tabreez, the tone of the note would not have been less defiant. I have had but little conversation with M. de Hartwig on the subject of the Shah's reply. When I saw him at an afternoon reception at the Russian Legation on the 20th instant his Excellency made a parade of consulting me on the subject. He said that he thought the reply of the Shah was "très malheureuse," and that he thought that His Majesty must at all events publish a "Dastkhatt," announcing the new Electoral Law, and that if I agreed in that view he would send his Oriental Secretary to Bagh-i-Shah to urge that course on him. I said I did not know what view you, Sir, would take of the Shah's answer, but I thought that the Shah would be wise to take some such steps to prove the sincerity of his promises, provided always it was not intended as a mere sop to stay the growing discontent at the delay in convoking Parliament, and that it was made clear that His Majesty was not trying to prolong the present régime indefinitely. M. de Hartwig said there could be no question of such an intention, and observing that he was glad I took the same view as himself, excused himself from further discussion on the ground that he was required at the card table. In thus avoiding a frank discussion of the question M. de Hartwig would seem to have had two objects in view: first, to be able to represent to his Government that I was satisfied with the very modest measure of compliance which he was prepared to urge the Shah to accord to the advice of the two Governments; and secondly, by this means to avoid, if possible, another joint *démarche* at the Palace, with its inevitable publicity.

As a result of M. Baranovsky's visit to Bagh-i-Shah on the 21st instant, M. de Hartwig was able to inform me the next day that a "Dastkhatt" would appear very shortly, perhaps even that very day, which it was expected would announce that the elections would take place on the 27th October, and the opening of Parliament on the 1st (14th) November. No such announcement, however, appeared, and even after the assurance given to me by the Shah at my audience of the 24th instant there was a further delay of six days till the Rescript finally appeared. By this time I am convinced that M. de Hartwig was sincerely doing his best to urge some measure of compliance on the Shah, but it is probable that he found that it was by no means easy to efface the impression his earlier attitude had produced on the Shah's mind, and that the reversal of his course against the whole weight of the Court Camarilla was not to be achieved at a moment's notice. I may remark also that in no single conversation that I have had with him has M. de Hartwig expressed willingness to insist with the Shah on the advice tendered by the two Governments that the restoration of order in Tabreez will be best advanced by the publication of his intention to assemble Parliament. I have twice pointed out to him that in ordering the Maku Kurds to attack the Nationalists on the 11th instant the Shah was deliberately acting against the views expressed in the identic communication, but on both occasions M. de Hartwig gave me to understand that in his view the Shah could not be expected to desist from an attempt to crush the insurgents just when his preparations for a great effort were complete. It is probable, however, that M. de Hartwig's reluctance to make any representations on this point is to some extent due to the consciousness that his influence with the Shah was not at the moment sufficiently strong to prevail against the contrary advice of the Minister for War.

Ever since the events of December last I have felt that frank discussion and loyal co-operation with M. de Hartwig in Persian questions are almost impossible. In matters where Russian interests are not concerned, as, for instance, in the Persian Gulf, and



especially when there is any question of combating German influence, he had been willing enough to give me assistance. With these exceptions, he has constantly, in matters of joint interest, been apt to act quite independently, and any objections which I have made when his action appeared to be inconsistent with the general policy of non-interference agreed on by the two Governments are met with an appeal to the necessity of avoiding any appearance of discord between the two Legations. In present conditions the Russian Minister's position makes it easy for him to follow this course. The Shah relies on Russia and entertains suspicions of ourselves as the alleged supporters of the Nationalist party against him, suspicions which I cannot acquit M. de Hartwig of encouraging by his attitude and language at the time of the *coup d'État* of June. It might have been expected that the strong reproof which his action at that time evoked from St. Petersburg would have induced M. de Hartwig to have abandoned his selfish and, I venture to think, extremely shortsighted policy in Tehran, but the events of the last three weeks compel me to the conclusion that this is not the case, and that so long as he remains as the Russian Representative in Persia there is little hope that the good result aimed at by the conclusion of the Convention of 1907 will be realized.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[37031]

No. 90.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 266.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 2, 1908.*

WITH reference to your despatches Nos. 144 of the 14th August and No. 151 of the 31st August last on the subject of the shed which Messrs. Lynch desire to construct at Shellilieh, and their anxiety to obtain a speedy settlement of this question. I have the honour to report that I have succeeded in obtaining certified copies of Moin-ut-Tujjar's title-deeds to the disputed site in the Shellilieh "Shem." The documents appeared, from a cursory examination, to be in order, but as it seemed to me to be outside the competence of this Legation to pronounce upon their authenticity, I transmitted them to the representative of the Persian Transport Company in Tehran for transmission to Messrs Lynch's agency at Ahwaz. It should in this way be possible to decide the matter on the spot in a Shari Court, or by whatever other procedure the litigants may choose, Sheikh Mortaza having professed himself able and willing to prove his claim if confronted by that of Moin-ut-Tujjar in a concrete form. In order to diminish the chances of difficulties being raised locally, Abbas Kuli Khan, acting under my instructions, has obtained from Moin-ut-Tujjar a promise that he will appoint a competent agent to represent him locally in this matter.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[37032]

No. 91.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 267.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 2, 1908.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 156 of the 2nd ultimo, inclosing a letter from the Persian Transport Company on the subject of the proposed repairs to the Godar Bridge, I take leave to observe that Captain Lorimer is perfectly aware of the Company's connection with the Ahwaz-Ispahan road, and fully realizes the importance of keeping it and the bridges on it in good repair.

The Company, I learn, fail to understand Captain Lorimer's statement that the Khans' offer to pay 200*l.* for the repairs is generous, and yet the sum offered exceeds that in the estimate furnished to Captain Lorimer by Messrs. Lynch's Ahwaz agent. The Company go on to say that it is not generous of the Khans to pay 200*l.* in order to obtain a revenue of 3,000*l.* or more, and that it is not right that they should agree to spend 200*l.* on repairs if that sum is insufficient to do the work properly. With the latter statement, as a general proposition, I am in entire accord, but if the sum is insufficient it is unfortunate that a smaller one should have been mentioned in the estimate. The former statement, on the other hand, confuses two quite distinct

questions. In the matter of bridge repairs the Company is in the position of a contractor for a specified undertaking, and is consequently, I take it, in no way concerned with the revenue derived from the road.

In regard to the penultimate paragraph of the Persian Transport Company's letter, I take leave to repel the insinuation that the Company is being "required to share in the expense of these repairs from which it receives no profit." All that has been done was to point out to the Company the extreme unwisdom of receding from the understanding arrived at by Captain Lorimer acting in pursuance of their expressed wishes, and the prejudicial effect which would ensue should they persist in their resolve to do so.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[37033]

No. 92.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 268.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 2, 1908.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 249 of the 10th ultimo, I have the honour to state that little or no progress has been made during the last month in the negotiations which, as reported in my above-mentioned despatch, had been begun between the Delegates of the Nationalist party and the Governor-General at Tabreez. During a meeting which took place on the 11th ultimo, and at which the Governor-General clearly showed his unwillingness to make any concessions pending the complete submission of the insurgents, a force of Maku Kurds with several guns delivered a fierce attack on the north-west quarter of the town. The Nationalists, however, repulsed the Kurds, who abandoned their camp with one gun and twelve loads of ammunition. The losses on both sides are estimated at about 200.

During the following week both sides remained inactive, until on the 22nd ultimo the Governor-General issued an ultimatum giving the Nationalists 48 hours in which to surrender, on the threat of bombarding the town. His Highness at the same time gave notice to the Consulates of his intention, and asked them to withdraw any of their subjects who should be among the insurgents, as he declined responsibility for their safety.

Acting on instructions from Mr. Marling, Mr. Stevens replied that the European Christian quarter of the town being in the hands of the revolutionaries, and consequently forming part of the threatened area, British subjects, though non-combatants, were by force of circumstances among the insurgents, and that he declined to waive the responsibility of the Persian Government for the safety of their lives and property.

The period of grace expired at sunrise on the 24th ultimo without the insurgents having made any sign of submission, and in the afternoon of the same day the bombardment was commenced. The firing of the Shah's forces, which can have had little effect on the buildings of the town, was continued on the two following days, and the Maku cavalry joined in the attack. The Nationalists, however, held their positions, and the attempt to crush the movement remained unsuccessful.

Negotiations, in which the Russian Consul-General took part, were resumed, but, so far as I can learn, without any definite result.

It is clear that the Shah's cause has suffered considerably by the resistance of the Nationalists party, and the inability of the Governor-General and the Sipahdar to bring about the submission of the town has much annoyed His Majesty, who, according to the Minister of War, as reported in my telegram No. 329 of the 6th instant, has withdrawn the Commander-in-chief, and considers Ain-ed-Dowleh quite unfitted for his task.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.



[37034]

No. 93.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 269.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 2, 1908.*

WITH reference to Mr. Marling's despatch No. 257 of the 11th ultimo, I have the honour to report that on the 20th ultimo Mr. Marling learnt that Hashmat-ul-Mulk had received his appointment as Governor of Kain, and a few days later his Excellency left Tehran to take up his post. The news of his dismissal must have reached Shaukat-ul-Mulk almost simultaneously, for on the following day Mr. Marling received a telegram from His Majesty's Consul at Seistan, who in the course of his usual summer tour was at the time at Sarbisha, and thus in close communication with the Shaukat, informing him of the fact, and urging him to make strong representations to the Persian Government to prevent the return of Hashmat-ul-Mulk.

Major Kennion's subsequent telegrams appeared to indicate by their insistence that he scarcely apprehended how radically the policy of His Majesty's Government in regard to interference in the internal affairs of Persia had been affected by the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Agreement of the 31st August, 1907. Mr. Marling therefore addressed to him the despatch of which I have the honour to inclose a copy.

Mr. Marling gathered also from his telegrams that Major Kennion had so far encouraged Shaukat-ul-Mulk to hope for effective support from us to enable him to retain his position as Governor of Kain, that failure to do so might sensibly affect the influence of His Majesty's Consul in those districts. Mr. Marling therefore thought it worth while to make a further effort to prevent the return of Hashmat-ul-Mulk to Eastern Persia, and at his audience with the Shah on the 24th ultimo he mentioned the matter to His Majesty. He was very careful to point out that his sole object in introducing the subject was to represent to His Majesty that the change of Governor which he had authorized was calculated to disturb the tranquillity which Shaukat-ul-Mulk had succeeded in maintaining for the past two years. The Shah said that he had received Petitions from the inhabitants of Kain complaining of the Shaukat's mismanagement of the province, but on Mr. Marling's informing him that he knew that one or more Petitions in a very different sense, signed by large numbers, had been addressed to His Majesty (though they might never have reached this high destination), His Majesty promised to examine the question anew.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 93.

*Mr. Marling to Consul Kennion.*

(No. 10.)

Sir,

*Tehran, September 22, 1908.*

IN your telegram No. 89 of the 5th September you suggested that, in order to assist Shaukat-ul-Mulk to raise a sufficient sum to provide the "pishkesh" requisite to secure him in his post as Governor of Kain, His Majesty's Government should give a guarantee for any advance he might obtain from the Imperial Bank of Persia for that object, and although in reply I informed you that I could not recommend such a measure, yet in a subsequent telegram (No. 99 of the 17th instant) you again reverted to that suggestion. It is therefore fair to conclude from your insistence in recommending so very exceptional a measure you attach very considerable importance to the matter; but, on the other hand, the reasons you adduce appear to me to be far from convincing. Your arguments, if I understand the position rightly, amount practically to this:—

1. That whereas Shaukat-ul-Mulk has been a fairly good Governor, and has shown himself friendly to ourselves, his half-brother is likely to prove less satisfactory in both respects, and his return to Eastern Persia may not improbably result in disorders breaking out in Seistan and Kain; and

2. That our prestige is involved in giving effective support to Shaukat-ul-Mulk.

As regards the former argument, there is no doubt much that can be urged in the interests of good government and the development of trade, but these considerations would not in themselves justify more than the friendly, if urgent, representations which I have made to the Persian Government in favour of the retention of the Shaukat. On the other hand, the argument founded on considerations of our prestige appears to me to be unsubstantial, and that it should be used in relation to the Reactionary party and Russia appears to imply a failure to comprehend the radical change which the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Convention of last year has necessarily effected in our attitude towards Persian affairs. The object of that part of the Convention which relates to Persian affairs was to put an end to the irritating conflict of interests between the two Powers in this country, and, as a natural outcome of its conclusion, the two Governments have come to an understanding that their policy should in future be one of common accord and, so far as possible, of non-intervention in internal questions. There should therefore—and in view of the fact that my representations have received some support from the Russian Minister. I may say that there can be no question of maintaining or enhancing our prestige as against Russia, and as regards our local position and our influence in Persian eyes, these are perfectly safe in your care.

The policy of non-interference in internal questions makes it incumbent on His Majesty's Representatives to abstain from identifying themselves with either of the two parties into which the country is at present divided; thus, when you urge that the appointment of Hashmat-ul-Mulk to the governorship of Kain is a triumph for the Reactionary party as against ourselves, the argument conveys the impression that the policy laid down by His Majesty's Government has not been so observed in Kain as to prevent any misconception of our attitude of neutrality in internal questions; and that you have given assurances of support to Shaukat-ul-Mulk which would not, in my view, be either consistent with my general instructions or expedient to attempt to make. In Tehran I have tried to make it clear that our interests in this particular question are identical with those of Persia, viz., the maintenance of order; and, I presume, that in your intercourse with Shaukat-ul-Mulk you will not have allowed him to entertain any false ideas as to our reasons for supporting him, or as to the length we can go in doing so.

However excellent a Governor may be (and in Persia it is a very relative term), and however friendly to ourselves, there is a point beyond which it is, generally speaking, inexpedient to commit ourselves to supporting him, and that point is reached when success in doing so becomes, so to speak, a point of honour for us. In the majority of cases—that of Hashmat-ul-Mulk in 1904 is particularly apposite—the game is not worth the candle; while if we should be unsuccessful we have to deal with a new Governor, who will be naturally hostile to us for having opposed his nomination, and, our opposition having failed, will be disposed to underrate our influence.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[37035]

No. 94.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 270.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 2, 1908.*

THE German Minister was received in audience by the Shah on the 21st ultimo. The Minister for Foreign Affairs told Mr. Marling on the following day that, in seeking an interview with His Majesty, Count Quadt's sole object was to obtain an additional subvention for the German School, in order to enable that establishment to open a wing for boarders. The request, his Highness said, had been refused, nominally on the ground that the boarding system was opposed to Persian ideas, but really on account of the financial difficulties of the Shah. Ala-es-Sultaneh assured Mr. Marling that, so far as he was aware, for he was not present at the audience, no other topic was touched on.

The Russian Minister had no information whatever on the object of Count Quadt's audience.



As regards the German School, I understand from M. Mornard, the Administrator of Customs, that the subvention is being regularly paid from the revenues of that Department.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[37036] No. 95.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 271.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 2, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul for Arabistan respecting the probable existence of a market for oil for oil-engines at Bagdad.

I venture to support Captain Lorimer's suggestion that Major Ramsay's letter should be communicated to the Oil Syndicate, together with the nature of his reply to that letter.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 95.

*Vice-Consul Lorimer to Mr. Marling.*

(No. 122.)

Sir,

*Ispahan, September 22, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to forward inclosed a copy of a letter which I have received from His Britannic Majesty's Political Resident in Turkish Arabia announcing the probable existence of a market in Bagdad for oil for oil-engines, and asking whether the Concessions Syndicate would be prepared to do business with the oil they have struck in Arabistan.

I have replied that to all appearances there is no prospect of oil being placed on the market within a year from now, but that I am forwarding his letter to you with a view to its contents being communicated to the Syndicate authorities.

I would suggest that this should be done, and I shall myself communicate with the General Manager in Arabistan, in case by any possibility it should be practicable to dispose to advantage in this way of the oil which is being collected or is escaping from the first boring.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) D. L. R. LORIMER, Captain, Indian Army.

Inclosure 2 in No. 95.

*Major Ramsay to Vice-Consul Lorimer.*

My dear Lorimer,

*Bagdad, July 17, 1908.*

WE hear tales of oil spouts having been found near you, and I believe that they are at any rate partially true.

I have taken a great interest in introducing British machinery and have had a good deal of success, but I could do much more if I could find a cheap fuel.

Are your oil people in a position to do any business in oils suitable for oil-engines, if so, can you get from them any idea of their terms of business? If they have no engines on which to try their fuel I should be glad to give samples of their oil to people here who are interested in importing oil-engines. If fuel could be reduced a bit in cost I believe there would be an enormous market for it in this country.

Yours sincerely,  
(Signed) J. RAMSAY.

[37037]

No. 96.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 272.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 7, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the usual monthly summary of events in Persia during the past four weeks.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 96.

No. 10.—*Monthly Summary of Events in Persia.*

*Tehran.*

SIR GEORGE BARCLAY arrived at Tehran on the 1st October, and presented his credentials to the Shah on the 3rd October. Mr. Marling left Tehran on the 6th October.

2. The Russian Minister was the guest of Amir Behadur Jang (Sepahsalar) on the 12th September, and afterwards had a long audience with the Shah.

3. The Shah's reply to the Anglo-Russian identic note respecting the convocation of the Medjliss was received on the 18th September, and was very unsatisfactory.

4. Mr. Marling had an audience with the Shah, at His Majesty's request, on the 24th September, when current political questions were discussed, as reported in a separate despatch.

5. The Shah's Rescript respecting elections for the new Medjliss was published on the 30th September. It is generally considered to be unsatisfactory, and no one appears to be taking steps in the matter of elections. It is generally thought that the Shah and Court party have no real intention of allowing Parliamentary institutions to be reintroduced. The Court party, which is too deeply committed to the reactionary cause, will do all in their power to prevent regular elections taking place, and there appears to be every probability that matters will be allowed to drift until the date fixed in the identic note for the opening of the Medjliss (14th November), when, perhaps, a hasty attempt will be made by the Court party to select some nominees of their own in the nominal capacity of Deputies. There is, at any rate so far, no sign whatever of the formation of an independent National Assembly.

(Signed) G. P. CHURCHILL,  
*Oriental Secretary.*

*Tabreez.*

The situation is reported on in a separate despatch.

*Resht.*

1. Anarchy still prevails in Talish. The newly appointed Deputy Governor of Talish, Doulab, was recently ignominiously expelled from the district with his thirty sowars. The Governor of Ghilan left for Talish at the end of September with some soldiers to restore order, but on account of the heavy rains was unable to proceed. The troops are suffering from want of food and clothing.

2. No one in Ghilan has the courage to take active measures in support of the Constitution, and unless troubles occur in Tehran the province will probably remain quiet.

*Meshed.*

1. His Majesty's Consul-General learnt at the end of August that 600 Afghans, with 500 camels, had left Herat for Bunder Abbas to fetch rifles.

2. The Tehran Mujtched, Seyed Mohammed, reached Meshed early in September, and was accorded a quiet but open welcome. Recent events in Turkey are said to have greatly encouraged Persian Nationalists at Meshed.



3. Some 2,000 Turcomans raided the country round Jajarm early in September, but withdrew after two or three days.

4. On the 19th September 600 families of Jamshedis were reported to have returned to Afghanistan from Transcaspia.

#### *Turbat-i-Hayderi.*

1. During August the following parties of Russian Cossacks passed through Turbat: six from Karez, on their way to Bunder Abbas and Kerman; four on their way from Karez to Birjand; four from Birjand, returning to Russia; three from Meshed, for Bunder Abbas. On the 1st September four Cossacks arrived from Russia on their way to Kerman.

2. Captain Iyass has closed the Turshiz quarantine post.

3. During August all arrivals from Afghanistan were detained in quarantine and examined by the Russian doctor. The doctor made careful inquiries from one Cabuli and took full notes on the road, water, supplies, length of stages, &c. Since the 1st September no caravans have been detained at the quarantine post.

4. On the 9th September another robbery on the Yezd road was reported, 150 camels and their loads being carried off and 20 men killed or wounded.

5. The Russian officer, Feodoroff, as to whose fate there was some anxiety, arrived from Birjand on the 10th September.

6. Karez reports that a force sent out to revenge the death of some Berberis reached the frontier, but, seeing it would have to fight, returned. Karez also reports that the Russians are very busy collecting statistics of Afghan trade and routes.

#### *Ispahan.*

1. The following Bakhtiari Khans were at Ispahan during September: Serdar Zaffer (Khosrow Khan), Behadur-ed-Dowleh, and Muin Humayun. The object of their visit was the settlement of the question of who should have charge of—

(1.) The roads.

(2.) The Government of Feridun; and

(3.) The command of the Chahar Mahal and Feridun regiments, and the Ispahan artillery and arsenal.

The Governor gave the roads and the Governorship of Feridun to Zergam-es-Sultaneh, Bakhtiari. The Khans, not being on good terms with the latter, are much annoyed at this. The command of the forces was given to the Khans by orders from Tehran, and the Governor objects to this as depriving him of a source of profit. A compromise will probably be made.

2. The Governor-General returned the visits of the British and Russian Consuls-General on the 10th September, just when a simultaneous reminder was about to be sent to him by them.

3. The town remains quiet, but the local clergy are believed to be plotting against the Governor-General.

#### *Yezd.*

All roads from Yezd are entirely in the hands of robbers, and trade is practically at a standstill. The merchants have telegraphed to the Shah and begged his assistance, but in vain. No attempt is made to restore order, and the Governor's usual reply to a complaint of robbery is that the place where it occurred is outside his district. The postal service is entirely disorganized. As many as five posts were recently collected at one spot waiting for an escort.

#### *Seistan.*

1. Revenue collection is proceeding in Seistan, and harsh measures are resulting in some discontent.

2. The telegraph line is in need of repairs. Up to early in August no repairs had been done this year, and there seemed to be no intention of renewing the poles, many of which were rotten.

3. The Russian Bank in Seistan is reported to be getting in fresh stocks of goods, in contradiction to the belief that it was abandoning the "general stores" business.

4. The Seistan Karguzar telegraphed about the 26th August to the Foreign Minister that he did not know the status and position of Lieutenant-Colonel Von der Flaas, and that that officer declined to enlighten him on the subject.

5. The Shaukat-ul-Mulk, after a long struggle, involving many appeals to the British Legation, has been dismissed from the Governorship of Kain, to which his half-brother, Heshmet-ul-Mulk, has been appointed. It is stated that 66,000 tomans (13,000*l.*) is the sum the latter paid to the Shah and his entourage for the post.

#### *Kerman.*

The district has relapsed into its former state of lawlessness; traffic on the main routes is paralyzed, and the postal service is completely dislocated. The new Governor, Sahib Ekhtiar, reached Ardistan on his way to Kerman about the end of August.

#### *Kermanshah.*

His Majesty's Consul reached Hamadan from Tehran on the 7th September, and left for Kermanshah a few days later.

#### *Shiraz.*

1. The sons of the late Kavam-ul-Mulk arrived on the 13th September from Bushire. They exchanged cordial messages with the Resident and Consul.

2. Public disorder in Fars continued to increase during August and September. Three posts and numerous caravans were robbed. Kazerun continued in a state of permanent disorder. Sivend was raided by Arab tribesmen. The Deputy Governor led an expedition against the Basiris, but effected nothing.

3. The new Governor-General, Assef-ed-Dowleh, arrived on the 21st September. Previous to his arrival the Deputy Governor had acted with such marked discourtesy towards the British Consulate that strong representations had to be made at Tehran on the subject. Immediately after the Governor-General's arrival his deputy (Serdar Firouz) tendered a full apology in person at the Consulate.

#### *PERSIAN GULF.*

##### *Bushire.*

The Darya Beggi is reported by the Residency to have been dismissed from the Governorship of the Gulf ports. It having come to the knowledge of His Majesty's Legation that the Gulf ports had been included in the Governorship of Assef-ed-Dowleh, who intended to send as his deputy to Bushire a brother whose reputation is far from good, representations are being made on the subject.

##### *Bunder Abbas.*

Lieutenant Gabriel resumed charge of the Consulate on the 2nd September, but has since been compelled by ill-health to again leave the place. Captain Shakespear will probably succeed him.

##### *Lingah.*

Mr. Brown, of Wöneckhaus and Co., recently seized some shells bought by Messrs. Gray, Paul, and Co., on the ground that the man who sold them was indebted to him. The case was referred to Bushire. Mr. Brown is also said to have offered to farm the port of Kung for 60 tomans, but his offer was not accepted.

(Signed)

C. B. STOKES, Major,  
Military Attaché.

October 7, 1908.



[37039]

No. 97.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 274.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 7, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I arrived at this capital on the 1st instant.

The formalities of my reception at Enzeli and at Tehran are described in the accompanying Memorandum by Mr. Churchill. Those at Enzeli, where I arrived at 8 o'clock in the morning of the 29th ultimo, were curtailed owing partly to the indisposition of the Mehmandar, the Serdar Motamid, who was too ill to leave his house at Resht, and partly to the absence of the Governor of Gilan, who had taken away all available troops to quell a disturbance in the district. On reaching Resht I proceeded, accompanied by the Deputy Governor of the province, who had met me at Muinieh, a garden some little way outside the town, to the house of the Mehmandar, who in the meantime had so far recovered that he felt able to undertake the journey to the capital. I did all I could to dissuade him, as he was evidently still suffering from the effects of fever, but he insisted on carrying out the mission of escorting me to Tehran, which had been intrusted to him by the Shah's Government. After lunching at his house, we set out at 4.30 for Tehran. Owing to the admirable arrangements made by Mr. Churchill and the Mehmandar there was no delay at any of the post stations, and we reached the last station before the capital at 10 A.M. on the 1st instant, the journey having occupied less than forty-two hours.

I was received by the Shah in solemn audience at Bagh-i-Shah on the 3rd instant, in order to present my letters of credence, as well as those recalling Sir Cecil Spring-Rice. I inclose a copy of my speech on this occasion. The Shah, in his reply, thanked the King for his letters, and was good enough to express his satisfaction at my appointment. He added that I could count on the co-operation of his Ministers for the accomplishment of my mission. I then handed to His Imperial Majesty the present which I had brought for him from His Majesty's Government, a watch with the Royal Arms in enamel and brilliants. I had been in some doubt as to the propriety of presenting this gift in view of recent events, and in particular of his long delay in sending a Minister to London, but after discussing the matter with Mr. Marling, I thought it better to avoid a departure from the usual practice, which would have been intensely annoying to the Shah, and would have prejudiced him against me at the very commencement of my mission. The few minutes' conversation which followed my speech and His Majesty's reply turned for the most part on matters of no particular interest, but I must not omit to record the manner in which His Majesty referred to Mr. Marling, of whom he spoke in most favourable terms, informing me quite spontaneously (I had not yet informed him that Mr. Marling was about to leave) that he was entirely satisfied with the manner in which he had conducted the affairs of the Legation during his charge.

After my audience I visited, in accordance with custom, the Grand Vizier and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who were at Bagh-i-Shah, and received me in tents near that in which I had had my audience.

I had asked for an audience of the Valiahd, but his Imperial Highness, a boy of 9, who had a day or two before undergone the rite of circumcision, was not well enough to receive me.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 97.

*Memorandum by Mr. Churchill.*

SIR GEORGE BARCLAY arrived at Enzeli on the 29th September. The Mehmandar was Serdar Motamid (Mohitashem-ul-Mulk) who acted in the same capacity on the occasion of Sir C. Spring-Rice's arrival in September 1906. (See Sir C. Spring-Rice's despatch No. 256 of the 7th October, 1906.)

Mr. Churchill was sent to Enzeli to meet His Majesty's Minister as before.

On this occasion the formalities were considerably curtailed owing to a variety of unavoidable circumstances described in the covering despatch of this Memorandum.

The Mehmandar having been confined to his house at Resht owing to a sharp attack of fever, his brother, Mujib-us-Sufera, proceeded to Enzeli with Mr. Churchill and Mr. Vice-Consul Rabino. They met His Majesty's Minister on board the Faku steamer outside the Enzeli bar, and accompanied him to the shore in plain clothes, arriving at the custom-house at 9.30 A.M. A salute of twenty-one guns was fired. His Majesty's Minister then proceeded at 10 A.M. to Resht by the new Russian road, avoiding the lagoon and Piribazar. At Muinieh, a garden about 3 miles outside Resht, His Majesty's Minister was met by Serdar Humayun, the Deputy Governor of Resht, with whom his Excellency drove to the Mehmandar's house, where he arrived at 2 P.M. The Mehmandar having by that time sufficiently recovered from his illness to travel to Tehran, His Majesty's Minister left Resht at 4.30 P.M. the same day and travelled night and day, arriving at Kazvin on the evening of the following day (the 30th September) too late to be met by the Governor, whom he therefore did not see.

The arrival at Tehran was arranged for the 1st October at 3 P.M., so a halt was made at the last station, Shahabad, for lunch, and at Mehrabad (3 miles from town) to put on uniform.

His Majesty's Minister wore full-dress uniform, and was met a short distance from the town gates by two members of the Legation staff, who brought Royal carriages into which the Minister's party was transferred.

The remainder of the ceremonial followed the usual precedent.

(Signed) G. P. CHURCHILL.

Inclosure 2 in No. 97.

*Speech by Sir G. Barclay.*

Your Majesty,

MY august Master, the King and Emperor, has been graciously pleased to appoint me Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to your Imperial Majesty's Court, and I now have the honour to place in your Majesty's hands the Royal Letters accrediting me in that capacity and recalling my predecessor.

It will be my most earnest desire, in obedience to the commands of my august Master, to continue and consolidate the relations of friendship which at present so happily subsist between Great Britain and Persia, and I entertain the confident hope that I can count on the cordial co-operation of your Imperial Majesty's Ministers to this end.

In conclusion, I would express the hope that Divine Providence may prosper your Majesty's labours on behalf of your Empire and people, and may bless your Majesty with a long, happy, and glorious reign.

[37040]

No. 98.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 276.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 8, 1908.*

IN continuation of Mr. Marling's despatch No. 264 of the 30th ultimo, and of my telegram No. 325 of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to transmit a translation of the Imperial Rescript as finally published, announcing the Shah's decision to convoke a Medjliss. I should mention that this document in the original is exceedingly obscure, and Mr. Smart, who made the inclosed translation, has found himself compelled to have recourse to conjecture in order to extract sense from certain passages.

The Assembly whose convocation is announced is described as a Medjliss with defined conditions and limitations, and I find the utmost incredulity prevailing amongst well-informed Persians as to the Shah's intention to summon anything like an independent Assembly. The Rescript, however, clearly promises that an Electoral Law shall be ready for proclamation on the 1st of Shavval (the 27th October), and that a Medjliss shall be convoked for the 14th November, and, in these circumstances, I would refrain from making suggestions as to any further action on the part of the two Legations.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[1622]

Q



Inclosure in No. 98.

*Imperial Rescript.*

To his Excellency the Sadr Azam,

AFTER the dissolution of the Medjliss, which step the Government took in order to preserve order in the realm and check mischief-makers, Anjumans, and irreligious persons, who were the cause of disturbance among the people, we promised that, on the restoration of order, the suppression of the revolutionary disorders and Anjumans, the establishment of security and the tranquillizing of the people, to summon a Medjliss, the laws of which shall be in accordance with the nature of the country and the Holy Law of the Prophet, and which shall protect and spread justice, in order that we may preserve in peace the whole people and all classes of our subjects, who are intrusted by God to our care, suppress the evildoers, and defend the holy truth of Islam, which is the first of our duties and beliefs.

Even thus did we proclaim to all the Representatives of the friendly Powers.

Now that the time for the convocation of the Medjliss is approaching, we give notice to your Excellency that a Medjliss with defined conditions and limitations, which will conform to the nature of the country, whose laws shall be in accordance with the Sher', and which will prevent the outbreak of disorders, will be convoked by us for the 19th Shavval (the 14th November).

Therefore proclaim to all the people of the kingdom and all classes of our subjects that, since God has constituted our sacred person the protector of the country and people, the possessor of the Crown and Throne, and defender of the holy religion of Islam, and that since we have no other object save the peace and tranquillity of men and the execution of the laws of justice, and since we consider it our duty to follow the path and the customs of the Prophet, therefore we will gladden and fill with hope the people of the kingdom by the issue of this Rescript; and we decree that a Medjliss, as defined above, composed of religious and proper persons, will, by the help of God and the favour of the 12th Imam, be convoked by us for the 19th Shavval. By means of this Medjliss, conform to the Sher' and justice, the people will be preserved in peace, the laws of Islam will be protected and put into execution, all traces of disorder, insecurity, Anjumans, shall disappear. Our sacred intentions will be followed by execution: the high roads will be made secure, the whole people will enjoy blessings in the shadow of our kindness and favour, provision will be made for their tranquillity, the requisites of the progress and the wealth of the country shall be increased, and, please God, by the grace of the Almighty and the favour of the 12th Imam, the doors of good fortune shall be opened on the people and they shall be at peace.

And now we command that you draw up the law of elections and the laws of the land in conformity with the Sher', and have it ready for proclamation on the 1st Shavval that both Assemblies may begin their Session. All men, recognizing their obligations, shall not exceed their rights, that all people may live in peace.

However, the rebels of Tabreez have been guilty of such mischief, sedition, and bloodshed, that the Government cannot forgo the punishment of these seditious scoundrels. Therefore it is proclaimed that, until order is restored in Tabreez, the rebels suppressed, and the unfortunate people of that town freed from the curse of these evildoers, Tabreez will be excluded from the effects of this Decree.

(Signed) MUHAMMED ALI SHAH KAJAR.

27 Shaaban, 1326 (September 24, 1908).

[37041]

No. 99.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 277.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 8, 1908.*

I HAVE to acknowledge receipt of your despatch No. 165 of the 9th September, forwarding copy of Sir F. Lascelles' despatch No. 183, Commercial, of the 20th August, reporting the contents of Herr Mygind's letter on the subject of British trade and activity in Arabistan to the "Berliner Tageblatt," upon which you were so good as to invite my observations.

From the second paragraph of the despatch, it would appear that Herr Mygind is ignorant of the existence of the Persian Transport Company's concession for the Luristan Road. No information is available at this Legation to show that Messrs. Lynch have indulged in any negotiations with any of the Lur tribes on any matter whatever, and such a proceeding on their part is in the last degree improbable. The suggestion that in the pursuance of their designs Messrs. Lynch should play off Bakhtiari against Lur reveals such a woeful ignorance of the real trend of local politics as to stamp Herr Mygind's letter as untrustworthy in other particulars.

You are already aware, Sir, of the object of Captain Lorimer's journey. That officer proceeded in the early summer as far as Dizful, hoping to be able to pay a visit to the Vali of Pushti-Kuh, whose acquaintance he has as yet had no opportunity of making. In view, however, of the insecurity of the first stage of the road west of Dizful he was compelled to abandon his project. It seems evident that Herr Mygind obtained information in regard to Captain Lorimer's movements, and drew upon his imagination to account for them. I am inquiring of Captain Lorimer as to the truth of Herr Mygind's allegations against him of discourteous conduct, and will not fail to report that officer's answer.

Herr Mygind has gauged with tolerable accuracy the character of Hajji Reis, Messrs. Wonckhaus' agent at Mohammerah; the individual in question is quite unprincipled, and though his services have been of value to the German firm, they have been heavily paid for.

As regards the incident referred to in the concluding paragraph of Sir F. Lascelles' despatch, no record of it is to be found in this Legation, nor has Messrs. Lynch's Tehran representative any recollection of it; he is, however, inquiring of the Ahwaz agency whether any foundation exists for Herr Mygind's allegations.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[37042]

No. 100.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 278.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 8, 1908.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 154 of the 2nd ultimo transmitting copies of your letter of the 11th August to the India Office, and the reply, dated the 26th August, received from that Department respecting Road and Motor-car Concessions in Persia.

In reply, I have the honour to state that the Isfahan-Bushire Road Concession referred to in Mr. Marling's telegram No. 244 of the 25th October, 1907, to the Government of India is part of the general Concession granted to a group of Persians in 1906, a copy of which was transmitted to you by Mr. Marling in his despatch No. 168 of the 14th July last. An attempt was made from Isfahan to start building the road towards Shiraz in September 1907, as reported at the time, but after a little work had been done over the first section of about 6 miles, which was already carriageable, the attempt was abandoned. The latest report on the subject is that nothing more has been done in the matter, and it is most unlikely that under existing conditions any further serious attempt will be made to exploit the Concession by its Persian owners.

With regard to Sani-ed-Dowleh's Motor-car Concession, no progress whatever has been made or is likely to be made by the concessionaire, who stated to a member of His Majesty's Legation, in answer to an inquiry on the subject, that he did not wish to hear any more about motor cars, and that he had dropped the project entirely having lost a considerable sum of money over it already, with no prospect of ever recovering it.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.



[37043]

No. 101.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 279. Secret.)

Sir,

Tehran, October 9, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith diaries of the Military Attaché to His Majesty's Consulate-General at Meshed Nos. 36 to 39 inclusive.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 101.

No. 36.—*Diary of Military Attaché, Meshed, for week ending September 5, 1908.**Summary of News.*

(Secret.)

THERE are various alarms of cholera in Transcaspia, so much so that the Persian authorities are imposing quarantine on the Persian frontier against arrivals from Askabad.

The Russian authorities deny the existence of cholera.

We have no direct report of any actual cases having occurred, but I hear that suspicious cases, closely resembling cholera if not the actual disease, have occurred at Krasnovodsk and in the neighbourhood of Askabad, while even the Russians admit that at least one case has occurred on a steamer bound to Krasnovodsk.

A Medical Corps, 100 strong, has left Askabad for Krasnovodsk, preceded by 100 Frontier Guards and fifty Cossacks, all apparently for cholera, quarantine, and hospital duty.

2. Some months ago the Russian newspapers were full of proposals to eliminate the military element on the Turkestan Railways and to reduce the railway troops. The pendulum is swinging the other way now: civilians are being ousted from well-paid billets to make way for soldiers, and the formation of a third Railway Battalion is under discussion.

3. Our Tashkent Agent also notes that the Tashkent machine-guns and mounted scouts have been formed into a sort of mounted infantry machine-gun battalion. (See paragraph 1, last week's diary.) Termez also draws attention to machine-gun equipment. Altogether it is evident that the question of the development of the machine-gun is receiving the closest attention in Turkestan.

4. Termez reports that the manœuvres this year are to take the form of operations between the Kerki and Termez garrisons, who will respectively march on one another. This is a more ambitious scheme than on previous years. It remains to be seen if the prevalent sickness will permit of its execution.

5. The Jamshedi affair remains *in statu quo*; the honours rather rest with the Afghan troops, who are displaying much energy in pursuing and cutting off any Jamshedis who cross the frontier to fetch their property, &c. In this work the Afghan troops do not hesitate to violate the frontier.

*"Transcaspian Review."*

August 22.—We hear from Khokand by telegraph that, in the middle (*i.e.* end) of July, orders were received to commence the construction of the Khokand-Namangan Railway as a State enterprise.

The station-master of Tiflis has been shot at and wounded.

August 25.—Some cases of cholera occurred in Tiflis on the 22nd August.

*Krasnovodsk Report.*

(Submitted from Kizil Arvat.)

August 15.—200 men of the Krasnovodsk Reserve Battalion, left E. by rail; they are invalids going for a change of air to Fairuza. All the troops in Krasnovodsk are

suffering from fever and dysentery; the number of troops has been reduced as much as possible, so now there are only about 500 men left there. It is believed that the distilled drinking water, and the ice made from it, are to a large extent the causes of the present universal sickness at Krasnovodsk, so the distilling of water has been temporarily suspended, and drinking water is being brought in from a place in the hills.

August 17.—There is quarantine at Krasnovodsk against arrivals from Astrakhan. Steamers from Astrakhan are not allowed to come in to Krasnovodsk at all; they have to land passengers at a quarantine station some distance up the coast.

August 20.—The establishment of skilled civilian railway workmen, at Kizil Arvat and other railway shops and depôts, has been much reduced since last year. It is believed that this is a measure of economy, and that the Government intends to replace these men by soldiers of the Railway Battalion.

*Askabad Report.*

August 13.—Trains are running through again between Krasnovodsk and Askabad, but the line is not properly repaired, and all trains still come in several hours late. For a week after the break occurred, no passengers at all were accepted in the trains (for the broken section); but now the passenger traffic proceeds as usual.

August 14.—One hundred men of the Frontier Guard left W. by rail; it was understood that they were being sent in connection with the establishment of quarantine measures on the Caspian.

August 17.—Twenty truck loads sleepers passed E.

One hundred native workmen sent W. to work on the railway.

August 19.—The practice camp of the 2nd Artillery Brigade has been broken up, and the batteries are slowly dispersing; to-day part of the Merv field battery left for Merv by rail, a party left last night too.

August 23.—Fifty Kavkaz Cossacks, with their arms and horses, passed W.

Twenty truck loads of sleepers passed E.

August 28.—A party of 100 of the Army Medical Department left W. This party included doctors, apothecaries, soldier dressers, &c. They were said to be going to Krasnovodsk in connection with the precautions being taken against the spread of cholera.

*Sarakhs Report.]*

August 27.—The Inspector-General of the Frontier Guard has been round visiting the outposts this week; he cast four of the horses of the Sarakhs detachment.

*Charjui Report.*

(This is a check Report of a travelling agent, not the same man who submitted Charjui Report in last week's diary.—H. S.)

August 23.—Garrison of Charjui:—

500 men 17th Turkestan Battalion.

400 men 18th

100 men 20th

Also a few men of several other Turkestan battalions.

200 men 2nd Railway Battalion.

200 men Amu Darya Flotilla.

100 Cossacks.

20 artillerymen.

6 machine-guns. (Previous reports have given four machine-guns and two old-pattern field-guns. Considering the detachment of artillerymen, this previous report seems most likely.—H. S.)

*Termez Report.*

August 20.—Two steamers have come in this week, bringing sixteen young officers, who have just passed out of the Military School, to be posted to corps in this garrison. All these young officers are said to be sons of officers now serving here.



These steamers also landed the following supplies and stores:—

- 2,000 poods wheat flour from Tashkent.
- 1,000 poods groats from Russia.
- 200 poods preserved meat in 1-lb. tins.
- 900 boxes biscuit.
- 16 pairs ammunition-waggon wheels.
- 1 bale new pattern leather covers for machine-guns. (These covers are for the usual pack machine-gun that is carried on one horse, with two horses for its ammunition.)

A Committee is engaged in specially inspecting supplies and stores, which have lain here more than five years, with a view to their condemnation if necessary.

The troops have been allowed a general rest and holiday up to the 15th August. After that date they are to prepare for manœuvres, which will commence on the 22nd August. The manœuvres this year are to consist of operations between the garrisons of Kerki and Termez. Both of these garrisons will march towards one another, and will meet in the neighbourhood of Kilif. There is a lot of talk about the new Turkish Constitution. The Russians say that it is only another English trick; the English will start their Parliament and then leave it to be massacred by the reactionaries, as they did in Persia.

#### *Samarkand Report.*

The Amir of Bokhara, with a large retinue, left for Russia via Tashkent.

August 22.—One rot, or 200 men, of the 6th Battalion, with the band, left W. by rail. I could not ascertain their destination.

#### *Tashkent Report.*

August 12-25.—On the 20th August the Amir of Bokhara passed through *en route* for Russia.

The artillery who have been encamped near Tashkent for training have returned to their various stations, with this exception, I have not noticed any particular movements.

(Agent's omission to give more detailed information about the movements of the artillery is by no means being passed over.—H. S.)

The total strength of the Tashkent garrison in and around Tashkent is now 8,000 men. This total includes the following mounted corps:—

- Orenburg Cossack Regiment, 800 strong.
- 600 mounted men, with the machine-guns.
- Two field batteries, armed with sixteen new pattern Q.F. guns, total strength 600 men.

The rest of the garrison is as usual, viz., six infantry battalions, foot artillery, &c.

(Signed) H. SMYTH, Captain,  
Military Attaché.

Meshed, September 5, 1908.

Inclosure 2 in No. 101.

No. 37.—*Diary of Military Attaché, Meshed, for week ending September 12, 1908.*

#### *Summary of News.*

(Secret.)

BOTH our Merv and Kushk Agents report the dispatch of further reinforcements from Merv to Kushk in connection with the Jamshedi affair and the presence of Afghan troops on the frontier. Our Kushk Agent says that 400 cavalry and a battalion of infantry have been sent from Kushk right up to the frontier.

2. No cholera is reported in Turkestan, but special precautions are being taken on the Tashkent-Orenburg, as well as on the Central Asian Railway, to prevent its entry into Turkestan.

3. The two Kahka batteries have not yet returned there from Askabad.

#### *"Transcaspian Review."*

August 28.—The bridge at verst No. 53, near Kara Tengir station, has been burned, and the line is temporarily interrupted.

At the station of Uzun Su seven waggons have been destroyed in a collision. Two waggons have been broken up in a slight accident at Askabad.

#### *Turkestan News.*

August 28.—On the 26th August mail train No. 4 came into Tashkent from Orenburg six hours late; this was caused by a deficiency in the supply of engines *en route*.

#### *"Transcaspian Review" continued.*

September 3.—In anticipation of cholera, hospital carriages are being attached to all passenger trains on the Tashkent Railway.

The market in Khokand is very bad just now; there has been a splendid cotton crop, and the place is full of cotton, but no one has any money to buy it, and there have been many bankruptcies.

#### *Kizil Arvat Report (for Krasnovodsk).*

August 25.—Fifty Cossacks passed W.

August 30.—A party of thirty men of the Frontier Guard, with some other details, passed through W. during the night.

(This would seem to be the hospital party reported by Askabad last week.)

September 1.—Three hundred more Russian railway workmen have been discharged from this place. They will leave shortly for Russia via Orenburg, and will be replaced by soldiers as required.

Strict precautions are being taken to prevent riots or outrages on account of these discharges.

#### *Sarakhs Report.*

September 2.—Thirty time-expired Kavkaz Cossacks passed through from Pul-i-Khatun *en route* for Tejen.

#### *Kahka Report.*

August 29.—Two batteries of artillery, which belong to Kahka, have not yet returned from Askabad.

The only troops here are fifty Frontier Guard, and a few artillery men in charge of the artillery lines.

#### *Merv Report.*

(This man has just returned to Merv after some weeks absence.)

August 31.—The following troops of this garrison have left for Kushk by train:—

- 250 of the Kavkaz Cossack Regiment;
- 200 of the 7th Transcaspian Battalion;
- 200 of the Merv Reserve Battalion.

The number of Afghan refugees (Jamshedis) in the Kushk district is said to be 4,000. The Russian authorities have granted them 6,000 roubles to build a proper Settlement for themselves.

#### *Kushk Report.*

September 5.—Reinforcements of about 900 men altogether have arrived in Kushk; 400 cavalry and one battalion of infantry have gone to the frontier in connection with the trouble between the Afghans and Jamshedis; these troops have gone towards Kara Tapa.



*Termez Report.*

August 30.—Two steamers have come in this week, carrying for the troops 700 bags of rice and 50 boxes of biscuits. They took back with them, for Charjui, 12,000 poods of barley, which had been purchased in this country.

The Termez troops are full of their preparations for their march to Kilif; 400 men have already started as an advance party.

*Samarkand Report.*

August 29.—The 8th Turkestan Battalion arrived here from Katta Kurgan for the manoeuvres.

August 31.—Eight cart-loads of rifle ammunition and other stores were brought away from the railway station.

September 2.—Four carts full of regimental stores came away from the railway station. Both these consignments came in by rail from W. (probably property of the 8th Battalion).

Sirdar Ishak Khan has been asked to go to Tashkent to discuss certain matters with the Governor-General. He has excused himself on the grounds of old age and ill-health.

All the guns, waggons, &c., of the field battery here were formerly painted a dark colour; now they have been painted sky blue. (He probably means a steely grey.)

*Tashkent Report.*

August 29.—Three hundred mounted infantry of this garrison left S. by C. A. Railway. They were said to be going to Kushk, on the Afghan frontier.

(Note.—As we have no news of these troops having passed Samarkand or Charjui, I am inclined to think that the movement of these troops is local, and that the "Kushk" idea arises from some rumour of the Jamshedi affair.—H. S.)

(Signed) H. SMYTH, Captain,  
Military Attache.

Meshed, September 12, 1908.

Inclosure 3 in No. 101.

No. 38.—*Diary of Military Attaché, Meshed, for week ending September 19, 1908.*

*Summary of News.*

(Secret.)

THERE is cholera at Tashkent, and on the railway between Tashkent and Samarkand. This cholera was imported from Russia by the Tashkent-Orenburg Railway. Not many cases are occurring, and it is said to be a mild type of cholera. The Russians are taking all possible precautions, so there seems no reason to fear a severe or general epidemic in Turkestan, or that it will spread to the countries further south.

2. A garrison report from Merv shows a reduction in the strength of the garrison. This corresponds with, and confirms, our news in last week's diary of the dispatch of a certain number of troops from Merv to Kushk.

3. A garrison report from Charjui also shows a slight decrease in the number of troops there. This is apparently due to the dispatch of some troops, belonging to the Termez and Kerki garrisons, up-stream from Charjui to take part in the Termez-Kerki manoeuvres.

*"Transcaspian Review."*

September 1.—The following are the earnings of the Turkestan Railways:—

	Expenditure.	Receipts.	Profit.
C. A. Railway—	Roubles.	Roubles.	Roubles.
1906 .. .. .	14,046,000	15,959,000	1,913,000
1907 .. .. .	13,805,000	15,625,000	1,817,000
T. O. Railway—			
1906 .. .. .	10,306,000	10,474,000	168,000
1907 .. .. .	13,909,000	14,709,000	800,000

Orders have been issued to all the stations of the C. A. Railway to disinfect (for cholera) all the railway carriages, especially those of the fourth class.

September 4.—The office of the Chief of the Province (i.e., Governor of Transcaspia) returns from Firyuza to-morrow.

Up to the 2nd September, there were ten cases of cholera in Tashkent, and five deaths.

Major-General Simionov, commanding the 6th Rifle Brigade and commandant of Askabad garrison, is dead.

September 8.—From the 1st (14th) January, 1909, the complete control of the C. A. and T. O. Railways will be delegated to Tashkent; nothing will be referred to St. Petersburg, as was formerly the custom.

September 9.—A case of cholera has occurred at Kaufmanski station.

*Turkestan News.*

August 30.—During July the Chimion wells produced 210,620 poods of naphtha, which yielded on refinement—

Benzine .. .. .	Poods.
Kerosene .. .. .	8,044
Astatki .. .. .	54,921
	146,672

Net (?) profit, 84,000 roubles.

September 1.—The Administration has given 20,000 roubles to the stations on the C. A. Railway for them to take precautions against cholera.

September 6.—Up to the 28th August three cases of cholera occurred in Tashkent.

*Kahka Report.*

September 9.—In my last week's report, I mentioned that there were fifty Frontier Guard at Kahka. There was the number actually present in Kahka at the time. There are, however, 200 Frontier Guard in and round Kahka, and it is the headquarters of a colonel of the Frontier Guard.

I am leaving for Askabad to locate and report on the two Kahka batteries.

*Sarakhs Report.*

September 11.—The old quarrel, between the Turkomans following Mangli Khan and those following Takki Khan, has broken out again. They have appealed to the Governor of Transcaspia.

*Merv Report.*

September 3.—The Merv Turkomans have petitioned the Governor of Transcaspia that they may be granted local self-government. They say that the Bairam Ali Turkomans already possess this privilege.

September 6.—Thirty-six men of the 6th Turkestan (? infantry battalion or mountain battery) passed E.

September 7.—Twenty-five men of the 17th Turkestan Battalion passed W.

September 8.—Six waggon loads of dry lucerne came in from W.



September 10.—Five trucks laden with rails and sleepers came in from W. Garrison of Merv:—

6th Transcaspian Battalion, 700 strong. Eighty mounted men too.  
7th Transcaspian Battalion, 400 strong.  
Merv Reserve Battalion, 500 strong.  
Kavkaz Cossack Regiment, 300 strong.  
4th (Orenburg) Cossacks, 100 strong.  
Artillerymen 2nd Brigade, 150 strong. The rest Firyuza.  
1st Railway Battalion, 100 strong.  
Mounted Frontier Guard, 50 strong.

Russian engineers are busy on the project of bringing a canal from the Oxus to the Merv district. This canal has been pegged out, and they say that it is to be begun shortly.

#### Charjui Report.

September 4.—Four hundred mixed detachments of troops belonging the garrisons of Kerki and Termez, including some engineers left by steamer up-stream.

Garrison of Charjui:—

1,000 men 17th Turkestan Battalion. (Only 600 of these men belonged to the 17th Battalion, the remaining 400 men were a mixed lot—partly without badges—stay in their barracks.)  
400 men 18th and 19th Turkestan Battalions.  
300 men 2nd Railway Battalion.

Detachments artillerymen, gendarmes, and convoy command.

(Signed) H. SMYTH, Captain,  
Military Attaché.

Meshed, September 19, 1908.

Inclosure 4 in No. 101.

No. 39.—Diary of Military Attaché, Meshed, for week ending September 26, 1908.

#### Summary of News.

(Secret.)

THE Transcaspian Sapper Battalion has returned to its permanent station at Merv from Tashkent, where it has been during the summer, undergoing its annual course of training with the head-quarters of the Turkestan Sapper Brigade. These Sappers appear to be in considerable request, as, the day after their return to Merv, three hundred of them were sent off by the Kushk Railway, apparently to work on the Sultan Band irrigation scheme and other miscellaneous work on the Kushk branch.

2. Charjui reports that there are 400 recruits in the barracks of the 17th Battalion, some of whom are being trained to the work of the steamers, 400 seems a large number of recruits for the steamers only, so some of these men are probably for the workshops, &c., in connection with the flotilla and railway. These recruits have been there some time, and must have come in small parties.

3. A garrison report from Samarkand shows the garrison to be fairly normal. The 8th Turkestan Battalion is still there for training with the rest of the troops. Each of the Samarkand Rifle battalions now has four machine-guns. This agrees with reports from Sarakhs and other places: to the effect that each of the Rifle battalions has been supplied with two extra machine-guns, i.e., four altogether, for use during this summer training.

#### "Transcaspian Review."

September 10.—A Government naphtha well has been dug at Cheleken, 51 sages deep and 16 inches diameter.

September 11.—In a collision at Chernayevo, a locomotive and three waggons were broken up.

#### Turkestan News.

September 9.—On Saturday, the 5th September, eight deaths from cholera occurred in Tashkent.

The Government naphtha borings at Cheleken have struck a new fountain (spouting well), which is yielding a large amount of naphtha.

September 10.—Prince Khilkov is coming to Tashkent soon, and will then go on to Ferghana.

September 11.—As a number of recruits are expected to arrive shortly the Central Asian Railway has been directed to increase the number of fourth class carriages available.

In the week ending the 29th August, 49,000 poods of cotton were exported from Krasnovodsk as follows:—

39,000 poods to Astrakhan.  
8,000 poods to Petrovsk.  
2,000 poods to Baku.

#### Sarakhs Report.

September 12-18.—Twenty-five Cossacks came in from Pul-i-Khatun. There were twenty-five Cossacks here before they arrived; and now it is said that these fifty Cossacks are going to remain here for the present. The troops are on parade daily, the four pack machine-guns always working with the mounted scouts.

I hear that there has been a fight on the Perso-Afghan frontier near Kafir Kala, between Afghans and Hazaras, in which 60 Hazaras were killed and wounded. The Afghans, who did this, retired into Afghanistan, and then Persian reinforcements arrived from Meshed. (This story is substantially correct, I believe.—H. S.)

#### Merv Report.

September 13.—About 400 Transcaspian sappers, equipped with entrenching tools, came in from E. These sappers have been away all the summer at Tashkent, only 200 having remained in Merv.

September 14.—Forty Kavkaz Cossacks came in from W. Three hundred Transcaspian sappers left by Kushk train, with entrenching tools and thirty two-wheeled new pattern transport carts.

Twenty Kavkaz Cossacks left with them too.  
September 15.—Twenty-eight (railway) waggon loads dry lucerne sent Kushk.

#### Kushk Report.

September 13.—Three carriages full of infantry came in from Merv. (These seem to be some of the sappers reported by Merv, though the dates do not quite agree.—H. S.)

September 15.—Three hundred Kavkaz Cossacks left for Takta Bazar; it is said that these Cossacks will stay there all the winter.

Six hundred of the Jamshedis, who came here from Afghanistan, have now gone back to Afghan territory.

I hear that Sirdar Ismail Jan, the son of Sirdar Ishak Khan, is coming to Kushk shortly.

The irrigation work at Band-i-Sultan is still being carried on; 200 skilled workmen, 500 labourers, and 300 carts are working there. It is said that the canal is to be taken from Band-i-Sultan right up to Bairam Ali.

#### Charjui Report.

September 15.—About 300 Transcaspian infantry passed W. by rail. (These seem to be the sappers mentioned by Merv, though the dates do not agree.—H. S.)

September 17.—Four machine-guns came in by rail from E.; two of them went on W. by rail, the other two were sent on board steamer for up-stream.

With reference to the garrison report in my last report: the 400 men that I



mentioned as staying in the barracks of the 17th Battalion are recruits, some of them learning the work on the steamers.

About the guns here: there are two old pattern field guns, breech-loaders, but not Q.F.

The agent who submitted Charjui garrison report, dated the 23rd August, Diary No. 36, now gives the following additional details:—

The 100 Cossacks belonged to the 1st (Astrakhan) Regiment. They had yellow cap bands, yellow shoulder straps, and yellow trouser stripes.

The machine-gun detachment consisted of 100 mounted men (scouts of the 17th battalion).

There are at Kaghan 100 men of the 8th Turkestan Battalion, and also 100 men of the 2nd Railway Battalion.

#### *Samarkand Report.*

September 10.—Strength of Samarkand Garrison:—

5th Turkestan Battalion; full strength; 80 horses; 4 machine-guns.

6th " " " " " "

7th " " " " " "

8th " " " " " " (no details of strength, &c.).

Zerabulak Reserve Battalion; full strength; no horses or guns.

2nd Transcaspian Railway Battalion; 400 men.

2nd (Ural) Cossacks; 400 men.

4th Field Battery; 8 Q.F. guns; full strength.

6th Mountain Battery; 8 guns.

Intendancy; 100 men.

Prisoners' Guards; 50 men.

There are in the fort, in charge of the fortress artillerymen (strength not given), the following guns:—

8 old pattern field guns.

8 machine-guns.

2 old heavy guns.

2 heavy field guns.

4 heavy machine-guns; these guns have not been here long (writer gives a long and rather involved description of them, from which I gather that they are of the nature of pompoms).—H. S.

Besides these guns there are stored away in the fort stores:—

8 new Q.F. guns.

8 old field guns.

(Signed) H. SMYTH, *Captain,  
Military Attaché.*

Meshed, September 26, 1908.

[37059]

No. 102.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 460. Confidential.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, October 19, 1908.*

THE day before yesterday M. Tcharykoff informed me that at a Cabinet Council held on the previous afternoon it had been decided to send a sotnia of Cossacks (eighty men) and two companies of infantry (120 to 150 men) to Tabreez, in order to afford protection to Russian subjects, the Russian Consulate, the Russian Bank, and the offices of the Russian Road Administration. During the course of the two interviews which I had with him both on Saturday and on the following day, he gave in detail the reasons which have led to the decision of the Russian Government. The following is a summary of the reasons:—

That a post station on the road from Julfa to Tabreez was, after a fight with some horsemen of the Shah in which thirty-five of the latter were killed, attacked and pillaged by the Nationalists, who looted a considerable amount of property and destroyed 4 miles of telephone posts and wires; that the Russian Inspector's life had been threatened, and that he only escaped by the assistance of one of the Nationalists, who himself was subsequently killed by one of the Shah's horsemen; that Sattar Khan had announced that he could not be responsible for the safety of Russians in Tabreez, where there were numerous—some 300 to 500—revolutionaries from the Caucasus, who formed the backbone of the Nationalist forces, and who were desperate men; that there was no security in Tabreez, and that at any moment attacks on Russian subjects might occur, or, as M. Tcharykoff put it, "we might hear to-morrow that the Russians had had their throats cut"; and that the telegrams which had been received both by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and by the Ministry of Finance showed that the danger was serious.

On the other hand, during the course of conversation M. Tcharykoff admitted that the employés of the Road Administration had been enabled subsequently to the attack to remove from the post station a motor-car and some other property which had not been injured or carried away by the looters, and that no actual menaces on Russians had as yet been made by the Nationalists themselves. The really dangerous element, in his opinion, were the revolutionaries from the Caucasus, daring and desperate men, who domineered the situation. These men had flocked over the border, and it had been impossible to properly block all exits along a mountainous frontier of some 300 miles in extent.

I informed M. Tcharykoff that I should like, in an unofficial manner, to point out to him that the dispatch of a Russian force to Tabreez just at the moment when the Shah's forces had received a complete defeat would have the appearance of a desire on the part of the Russian Government to crush the Nationalists and to re-establish the Shah's authority; that it would be regarded as an act of intervention in the internal affairs of Persia, and would, in great measure, undo the good effect of the visit of M. Isvolsky to London. I added that this would be most unfortunate, as public opinion in England had during the last few days shown in a remarkable manner the desire for a good understanding with Russia, and I should much regret if anything occurred to disturb the present friendly feeling.

M. Tcharykoff expressed his surprise that such motives should be attributed by His Majesty's Government to the action of the Russian Government, especially after the explanation which Count Benckendorff had been instructed to give. I told him that I was not repeating to him the opinion of my Government, but the views which they considered would undoubtedly be held in many quarters in England. It was possible, moreover, that Count Benckendorff had not yet had time to make the communication which had been telegraphed to him on Friday night.

M. Tcharykoff said that he trusted that His Majesty's Government would take steps to have the matter put in its real and true light. It was absolutely wrong to say that the Russian Government desired to intervene in the internal affairs of Persia, or to crush the Nationalists, or to re-establish the Shah's authority. He could assure me in the most positive manner that the sole object of the dispatch of the force was to reinforce the Consular guard at Tabreez and to afford adequate protection to the scattered Russian institutions in Tabreez. There were only fifty Cossacks in Tabreez, who guarded the Consulate; while the bank and Road Administration Office was protected by Persian Cossacks, who were quite untrustworthy in present circumstances. He would further tell me that as soon as the Cossacks left Julfa Proclamations would be distributed everywhere, announcing the object for which they were sent, and stating that the strictest orders had been given that they were not in any way to intervene in internal affairs, and that they would be withdrawn as soon as security was assured. This announcement would be published in the "Official Gazette" here and made known in Tehran. There was no intention to take sides in the struggle: it was a matter of perfect indifference to the Russian Government by whom security was established in Tabreez so long as such security was restored. The Russian Government had taken the step reluctantly, in view of urgent necessity, and had limited the force to a minimum. Were they to wait till Russians were murdered and Russian institutions pillaged and destroyed? If so, the measures they would then have to take would have to be on a much larger scale than those which at present they were adopting. He was sure that if British subjects were in a similar situation in a Gulf port His Majesty's Government would lose no time in dispatching ships and landing sepoys. He was most anxious that no misunderstanding should arise between the two Governments, as it was essential they should be on the



most friendly and frank relations. He did not know if His Majesty's Government quite appreciated the critical situation of Russian interests at Tabreez and in the Province of Azerbaijan generally, which was in such close proximity to the Caucasian districts, where anarchy was rampant. The conditions were very different from those existing elsewhere, and the Russian Government had to be peculiarly solicitous that no grave mishaps should happen to Russian subjects in Tabreez. He begged me to explain the matter fully to you, and to emphasize the fact that there were no ulterior motives in the step which the Russian Government had taken.

I asked if he did not think that the arrival of a Russian force or reinforcement might not provoke the very dangers which he wished to avoid. M. Tcharykoff was not of that opinion; but, in any case, after the information which had reached the Russian Government, and after the acts which had been committed, and in view of the threatening danger to Russian subjects, it was impossible for the Cabinet to incur the grave responsibility of leaving their countrymen inadequately protected and exposed to the dangers of assassination.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[37064]

No. 103.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 465.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, October 20, 1908.*

M. TCHARYKOFF informed me this afternoon that he had some good news to give me—it was to the effect that the reports which had been received from Tabreez were of a more favourable character, and gave hope that some semblance of order was being established. In these circumstances, the Russian Government had decided that the detachment of Russian troops should not proceed to Tabreez, but should remain at Julfa. He had informed M. de Hartwig by telegraph of this decision, and had told him that the detachment would remain at Julfa unless summoned to Tabreez by the Russian Consul-General. He had also sent instructions to the latter functionary that he was not to call for the detachment unless he was convinced that there was imminent danger to the lives of Russian subjects or of other European residents, and that, if the necessity should arise for the presence of the detachment, he was to take measures that it should limit its duties solely and strictly to affording protection to the Russian and European residents, and was not to interfere in any way in the internal affairs or dissensions. He had specially mentioned "European residents," as he had understood, from a conversation which you had had with Count Benckendorff, that His Majesty's Government desired that, should the occasion arise, other Europeans besides Russians should receive protection.

I observed that I presumed that the Consul-General would not call for the detachment without previously referring to St. Petersburg. M. Tcharykoff replied that this could hardly be done. Full responsibility must be left to the man on the spot, and he would not give orders to the detachment unless it was a matter of urgency, and, in that case, time would be of supreme importance. I said that this was true, but I hoped that the Consul-General was a man of moderation and not liable to take alarm unnecessarily. Good nerves were great desiderata in the circumstances. M. Tcharykoff said that the Consul-General had been thirty years in Persia, and could be trusted as a sober-minded man who would take calm and sensible views.

I told M. Tcharykoff that the news which he had communicated was a great relief to me, and I was sure would be a source of gratification to you. I should have had, I said, to speak very seriously to him on the subject of this question of reinforcing the Consular guard at Tabreez, as I gathered from telegrams which I had received from you how very seriously you viewed the matter. The necessity for doing this had been happily removed, but he understood well, I was sure, that none desired to strengthen and develop the friendly relations between Great Britain and Russia more than you did, and that His Majesty's Government had not the slightest feeling of jealousy in regard to Russian influence in Northern Persia, nor did they desire in any way to hamper or hinder it. But I could not conceal from him that, if the detachment had proceeded to Tabreez, it would have been almost impossible for you to have persuaded public opinion in England that its despatch was not indirectly meant to re-establish the authority of the Shah and to suppress the constitutional movement. Look, I said, at the coincidence. During the troublous times Russia had very properly remained

quiescent, even, perhaps, under some provocation; that I would admit; but directly the Shah's troops had been thoroughly well beaten, a Russian force moved immediately on Tabreez. How could it be contended that the dispatch of this force was not to give courage to the defeated party? It would have been deplorable from every point of view, outside even the limited horizon of Persia, if anything had occurred to blur our friendly relations, and I could not tell him how relieved I felt that the risk had passed away.

M. Tcharykoff said undoubtedly the advent from one quarter of Persian Cossacks and from another the march of Russian Cossacks would have had the appearance of some co-operation. Now it would be well understood that if the force were compelled to advance it would be in consequence of imminent and pressing danger, for which immediate relief was required.

I begged M. Tcharykoff to believe that neither my chief nor myself wished to cast the slightest reflection on the perfect good faith of the Russian Government, but I could not hide from him some doubts as to whether the Russian officials in Persia were not disposed to play off the Shah against the popular movement. In respect to this remark, M. Tcharykoff said that he had some further good news to give me, and this I will reserve for another despatch.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[37066]

No. 104.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 467. Confidential.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, October 21, 1908.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 465 of yesterday's date, I have the honour to inform you that M. Tcharykoff stated to me that M. Sabline, the newly-appointed First Secretary to the Russian Legation at Tehran, had received orders to proceed at once to his post, and that on his arrival there M. de Hartwig would come to St. Petersburg on leave and to report to his Government on the general situation in Persia. He would further tell me very confidentially that M. de Hartwig would not return to Tehran, but that a post would be found for him elsewhere. I told M. Tcharykoff that I thought that it was well that a change was to be made in the representation of Russia in Persia.

M. Sabline called on me yesterday, and said that he was leaving for Tehran early next week. He seemed to be a quiet, unobtrusive man, and I thought it advisable to impress on him the necessity of his working cordially with the British Legation, and of assisting our wishes that there should be no return to any reactionary policy in Persia.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[37145]

No. 105.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 351.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 26, 1908.*

SITUATION in Tabreez. My telegram No. 347 of the 24th instant.

His Majesty's Acting Consul-General states, in reply to my inquiry, that since the Russian telephone station was attacked some of the Russian colony have shown signs of great alarm, and are making preparations to move their families out of the town. Mr. Stevens considers their fears groundless, and he does not think that foreigners are in any more danger now than they have been during the past few months in Tabreez.

Even if the Nationalists were hard pressed, which is very unlikely in my opinion, if the Persians are left to themselves Mr. Stevens does not think that foreigners would be attacked.

Mr. Stevens adds that he hears that a meeting of some of the Notables of Tabreez has been summoned by Ain-ed-Dowleh.



[37148]

No. 106.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 352.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 26, 1908.*

RUSSIAN troops for Tabreez.

My telegram No. 350 of yesterday's date.

In reply to my inquiry, His Majesty's Acting Consul-General states that it was the general topic in Tabreez that the Russian troops had crossed the frontier. It is clear that it was generally believed from the telegram of the local Anjuman to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, reported in my telegram No. 349 of yesterday.

I am telling Mr. Stevens that it would have been better if he had reported it, not as a fact, but as a general belief.

[37300]

No. 107.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 353.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 26, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution.

Your telegram No. 298 of the 24th instant.

On Thursday last the two Legations renewed their representations respecting the disabilities imposed on Tabreez in the Shah's Rescript, and M. de Hartwig and I now propose, if our Governments approve, to present the following identic Memorandum to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, for communication to His Majesty. We propose this procedure in order to avoid the publicity of a representation to the Shah in person:—

"From information received by the British (Russian) Legation, it appears that relative calm has latterly been established in Azerbaijan. The population of Tabreez, weary of disorder and animated by the sincere desire to merit the clemency of your Majesty, have lately sent your Majesty a telegram praying you to grant them the benefits of the Constitution in the same manner as to the rest of Persia, and to permit them to take part in the elections fixed for the 27th October.

"His Majesty's (Russian) Minister, in obedience to instructions from his Government, has the honour to draw your Majesty's attention to the desirability in these circumstances, in order finally to calm this province, of not excluding it from the elections promised for the 27th October, and of seizing this occasion to grant an amnesty to all persons who have taken up arms during these last few months."

[37148]

No. 108.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 546.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 26, 1908.*

RUSSIAN troops for Tabreez.

Please refer to Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 352 of to-day's date, and bring this explanation to notice of Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, together with the regret of His Majesty's Government that an inaccurate report should have been transmitted.

[37020]

No. 109.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 301. Confidential.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 26, 1908.*

"TIMES" correspondent at Tehran.

See Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 224 of the 25th October.

The information of the correspondent appears to be fairly accurate, as will be

seen if your telegrams Nos. 335 and 338 are compared with his telegrams to the "Times" of the 11th and 18th October. Did you inform him that Russian Government had decided on retention of the Russian officers at Tehran? He would seem to have derived his idea that later on they would advance from M. Hartwig.

[36578]

No. 110.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 331.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 26, 1908.*

M. SEVASTOPOULO, First Secretary of the Russian Embassy, called at the Foreign Office on the 20th instant and read to Sir C. Hardinge a telegram which he had received from his Government to the following effect:—

"In consideration of the views which I had expressed to them, and in view of the fact that tranquillity reigned at Tabreez, and that Satar Khan, in agreement with the Russian Consul-General, was organizing measures of police protection, the Russian Government had sent orders to the troops which had been dispatched to Tabreez to remain at Julfa on the frontier."

Sir C. Hardinge told M. Sevastopoulo that, according to a telegram received from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, 148 Cossacks had already crossed the frontier at Julfa. He said that he would telegraph this at once to St. Petersburg, and that he felt confident that the Cossacks would at once be recalled.

He added that the Cossacks and infantry had received orders to wait at Julfa, and that the Russian Consul-General at Tabreez had received formal instructions to keep in touch with the Commander of the detachment, and that he was only to have recourse to their protection in the last extremity, and in the event of danger to life. The Russian Minister at Tehran had received instructions to see that these orders were carried out.

Sir C. Hardinge informed M. Sevastopoulo that he was confident that the news would give me sincere pleasure, and he thanked him warmly for the communication. He said how apprehensive I had been as to the effect upon public opinion of the dispatch of a Russian force to Tabreez, following, as it would have, immediately upon my recent interviews with M. Isvolsky, and that I had strongly impressed upon you the importance which His Majesty's Government attached to obtaining a reversal of the orders given.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) E. GREY.

[35859]

No. 111.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 26, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, respecting the Governorship of Kain.

I am to state in reply that, in view of the opinion expressed in Mr. Marling's despatch No. 257 of the 11th ultimo, of which a copy was forwarded to you in my letter of the 14th instant, Sir E. Grey considers that it would not be expedient to oppose further the appointment of the Hashmat-ul-Mulk, but that if he were to cause trouble the assistance of the Russian Government might be invoked to secure its dismissal.

Sir E. Grey proposes accordingly, if the Secretary of State for India approves, to take no further action in the matter.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[1622]

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[37351]

No. 112.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 27.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 17th instant, relative to the Bunder Abbas Consular guard.

*India Office, October 26, 1908.*

Inclosure in No. 112.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

October 17, 1908.

BUNDER Abbas. Composition of Consular guard. Your telegram of the 16th ultimo.

Existing cavalry detachment is required as personal escort for Consul when touring in interior or visiting town. We do not see our way to its withdrawal. It is important that position of our Consul should be maintained, having regard to fact that Russian Consul is always attended by smartly mounted Cossacks. For these reasons, withdrawal of cavalry is, in our opinion, not practicable.

[37394]

No. 113.

*Messrs. Ellinger and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received October 27.)*

Dear Sir,

28, Oxford Street, Manchester, October 26, 1908.

WE are in receipt of a letter from Haji Aga Mohamed Dehdashty Mouin-ut-Tujar, Tehran, dated the 5th instant, extract from which reads as follows:—

"His Excellency the new English Minister arrived three days ago, but I have not yet been able to pay him a visit. Mr. Marling will leave in two or three days. I shall be much obliged if you will ask your Foreign Office to recommend me directly to the new Minister, either by letter or by telegram."

We shall feel obliged if you can see your way clearly to comply with the Mouin's request, and thanking you in anticipation, we are, &c.

(Signed) ELLINGER AND CO.

[37436]

No. 114.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 27.)*

(No. 227.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, October 27, 1908.

TABREEZ elections: Identic Memorandum to Shah: Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 353.

Proposed text has not yet been received by Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, who has telegraphed to Tehran for it. From his remarks I gathered that he may think some modification desirable, and that he is not adverse to the holding of elections in Tabreez being somewhat delayed. A factor which has to be taken into consideration by the Russian Government is the presence of Russian revolutionaries in that town, who according to him played an active part in the recent disorders. When, however, he has received text of the Memorandum he will be able to let me have a definite opinion.

[37435]

No. 115.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 27.)*

(No. 354.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, October 27, 1908.

TELEGRAMS of "Times" correspondent.

Following is confidential:—

Your telegrams Nos. 300 and 301 of yesterday's date.

I have just been shown the telegrams referred to. So far as they report the movements of Russian officers I do not consider that the correspondent can be blamed for them. I was told by M. de Hartwig himself that Captain Ouchakoff (he is not a Colonel) and other Russian officers would probably leave for the neighbourhood of Tabreez. This was common talk in Tehran, and the "Times" correspondent did not hear of it at this Legation, nor, I believe, from the Russian Minister. Captain Ouchakoff did, moreover, join the Cossack force at Kasvin. There is no mention of Colonel Liakhoff going to Tabreez in the telegrams I have seen, and if it was announced in the "Times" that he was, I can only conclude that the telegrams were mutilated in transmission.

The decision of the Russian Government not to allow the officers to leave Tehran was not communicated to the correspondent by me, as, had I done so, he would have inferred that representations from us had occasioned it, which would have been very undesirable.

[36798]

No. 116.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 302.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, October 27, 1908.

AS the sanction of the Treasury to the expenditure involved by the retention of the Indian guard for the Oil Syndicate's operations during the next hot weather will be difficult to obtain, Captain Lorimer should be asked if such retention is really necessary.

Please refer to telegram of the 22nd September to the Viceroy from the Resident at Bushire.

[37300]

No. 117.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 303.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, October 27, 1908.

YOUR telegram No. 353: Identic communication to Shah.

Subject to concurrence of Russian Government, I approve text.

[37550]

No. 118.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 338.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 27, 1908.

COUNT BENCKENDORFF told me to-day that, as there had been rumours in the newspapers about a Russian invasion of Persia, he had thought of making a statement to the press that no Russian troops had crossed the frontier.

I told him that I had already made this statement in the House of Commons this afternoon.

He said that in that case it would not be necessary for him to make another statement.

I told him he would see in the papers what I had said. It had been quite on the spur of the moment, in answer to a supplementary question; but I had endeavoured to bring out the loss which Russian trade had suffered, and the difficulty in which Russia had been placed by the prolonged disturbances so near her frontier, in order to make people here understand the Russian position. I thought the House had been



satisfied and relieved. As the Russian troops had not really crossed into Persia, it was perhaps fortunate, after all, that the rumours in the papers had taken such an exaggerated form, for the more alarmist the original rumours, the greater was the relief and the more favourable the impression when the rumours were disproved.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) E. GREY.

[36731]

No. 119.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,  
Foreign Office, October 27, 1908.  
WITH reference to my letter of the 13th instant respecting the inquiry of Messrs. Strick and Co. as to the acquisition of Mining Concessions on the Islands of Sirri, Little Tamb, and Nabiya Farur, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, the accompanying copy of a telegram which has been received from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, proposing certain alterations in the draft of the Concessions for which, as you are aware, the local agent of the firm of Messrs. Hadji, Ali, Akbar and Co. is about to apply to the Persian Government.

Sir E. Grey understands that certain semi-official communications have recently taken place between your Department and the Board of Trade in regard to the feasibility of according the support of His Majesty's Government to Messrs. Strick's application for a Concession on the Island of Sirri concurrently with the support now being given to Messrs. Hadji, Ali, Akbar and Co., and, before replying to the telegram from Sir G. Barclay, it is proposed to await the observations of Lord Morley both as to the suggested amendments in the draft of the Concession and as to the course to be pursued in regard to the application of Messrs. Strick and Co.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[37435]

No. 120.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 551.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, October 28, 1908.

"TIMES" correspondent. Please refer to Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 354 of the 27th instant, and your telegram No. 224 of the 25th instant.

As a matter of fact, the messages from the correspondent of the "Times" newspaper are not inaccurate. I leave it in your hands as to whether to put the facts of the case before the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs in a friendly manner. If you do this, you should add that it is now perfectly understood by the "Times" that the Russian Government have throughout maintained a correct attitude; and you may also express my regret that such a misunderstanding should have arisen.

[37640]

No. 121.

Mr. C. Stevens to Foreign Office.—(Received October 29.)

Sir,

Wilton Hotel, Victoria, London, October 28, 1908.

FOLLOWING on our verbal interview of the 27th, I will now expose in writing my firm's several claims against the Persian Government, and beg you to bring the matter to the notice of his Excellency Sir E. Grey, and obtain from him at his earliest convenience his views on the different cases, which no doubt you will be kind enough to communicate to me at the above address.

1. £ T. 300.—These were sent by post from Tabreez to Urumia and robbed just before reaching latter. Being insured against all risks by the Persian Post Office, we put in a claim, and were informed that six months later we would be duly reimbursed.

\* No. 68.

It is now over two years that we cannot obtain satisfaction. We should be very grateful if the claim were pressed on Persian Government at earliest and best opportunity by His Majesty's Representative at Tehran.

2. *Sheep's Casings (Guts).*—Regarding this claim, I only have to refer you to a Petition addressed by Mr. G. Stevens, a member of our firm, from Tehran, through the Legation, to His Excellency Sir E. Grey, some time in May or June last. To this Petition we received a reply stating that His Majesty's Government could not demand the maintenance of the monopoly, which was in a Persian subject's name. This is quite correct; but I beg to draw your attention to the following facts, which alter the case:—

In 1904 the Persian Government informed His Majesty's Legation that a monopoly was being granted to a certain Hadji Kazem for the export of sheep's casings. The British Minister telegraphed the information to us to ascertain whether we had any objections to make. We replied that Hadji Kazem having passed contracts with us, we would not enter into competition for the said monopoly, and would be satisfied to see it granted to him.

Owing to foreign representations, the monopoly is no longer enforced. Hadji Kazem is unable to hold his engagements, and we are the sufferers. We cannot attack him, it being a case of *force majeure*. Had we known at the time, we should have requested the British Minister to prevent the granting of the monopoly.

I have no doubt that the other Legations were also informed in 1904, and evidently had no objections to make, as the monopoly worked quite smoothly for over two years.

If now His Majesty's Government does not see its way to obtain in the near future the maintenance of the monopoly in favour of Hadji Kazem, and if our claim against the Persian Government of 10,000*l.* (details, Petition to Sir E. Grey) for damages be considered unjust, then I have no doubt we are fully entitled to the most-favoured-nation treatment; and, in such a case, I humbly request you to send necessary instructions to British Minister at Tehran to obtain immediately for us a permit of export, requesting him at the same time to communicate on the subject with my senior partner, Mr. H. F. Stevens, Tauris, Persia.

Since two years, Russian, Austrian, and other British firms have obtained such permits, and are gradually taking the business out of our hands.

I will now add that it is very hard on us, who have now been established thirty-five years in North Persia.

3. *Silk-worm Seeds (Eggs).*—In the years 1906–7 we imported some 10,000 boxes into the Mazanderan Province. Persian Customs imposed an illegal duty, which we paid under protest, as per instructions received from British Minister at Tehran. During the same period importers of the article in Resht were only made to sign a document by which they engaged to pay the duty after settlement of the question in Tehran; to this day they have not disbursed a cent. Our claim has remained in suspense, although we have been assured by Legation that we would be refunded, the new duty being considered illegal. What must we now expect? Are we to give it up too?

4. *Indirect Claims owing to Recent Disturbances, Tabreez.*—With reference to these, it is difficult at present to state what they will amount to. That there will be some, I have no doubt. But we must wait for further developments before being fixed. But shall be pleased to know how such cases would be considered by His Majesty's Government.

These are, in a few words, the several claims for which we trust His Majesty's Government will do their utmost to obtain full satisfaction. Now remains the most important question—the Concession for running steamers on the Urumia Lake.

The said Concession belongs to a Persian Prince, Imam Kuli Mirza. It is his desire to give us or any other Britisher a share in the business on condition of putting a certain amount of capital. The main object of taking us into partnership is to avoid as much as possible trouble with Persian authorities, who would think twice before touching British interests.

The proposal was discussed by us long before the Anglo-Russian Agreement, and Mr. Wratislaw is there to prove it. Our only fault was to have omitted to inform His Majesty's Government; but at that time who knew what was going to happen?

On our consulting Legation lately concerning the proposed partnership, we were told we had better give it up, as it would be against the spirit of the Anglo-Russian Agreement. We informed our Persian friend, who then requested us to inquire of our Government whether we could not manage the business for him without having any interest whatever in it. We would then undertake the financial management of the

[1622]



enterprise without putting any capital into it, and would be paid a commission for our trouble.

I venture to hope that this new proposal will meet entirely with the approval of His Majesty's Government, who, by allowing us to undertake the business, would open out a new field for British industry.

I will state that we are ready to sign a written engagement that we shall have no pecuniary interests in the enterprise or share in profits, and will only receive a commission.

Being on the point of ordering the steamers, I shall be most grateful to receive a reply as soon as possible.

Thanking you in advance for all you will do for us, and begging you to excuse trouble I am causing, I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES E. STEVENS.

[37661]

No. 122.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 29.)*

(No. 232.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 29, 1908.*

"TIMES" correspondent at Tehran.

Your telegram No. 551 of the 28th instant.

M. Teharykoff was most grateful for explanations I gave him this afternoon on the subject, and observed that they would prove quite satisfactory to the Emperor.

[37559]

No. 123.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 29.)*

(No. 355.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 29, 1908.*

SITUATION at Tabreez.

I have received a telegram from His Majesty's Acting Consul-General reporting that the bazaar was opened on the 27th instant, and that the town is perfectly quiet.

He further reports that the Julfa road, to the serious detriment of trade, is still held up, though Shuja Nizam has been killed by a bomb which he received through the post.

[37664]

No. 124.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 29.)*

(No. 356.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 29, 1908.*

THE Shah has not yet published the Electoral Law, which was promised for the 27th instant. It is given out that the Persian Government have received telegrams from the provinces to the effect that there is no desire to take part in the Assembly.

The Court party evidently does not intend to allow the Shah to fulfil his promises.

[37664]

No. 125.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 559.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 30, 1908.*

PERSIAN Constitution. See Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 356 of the 29th instant and your telegram No. 227 of the 27th instant.

You should propose for the consideration of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, with regard to the joint communication which it is proposed to present to the Shah, some such addition as this: The two Governments are surprised that the Shah has not yet carried out his promise of publishing an electoral law, and they trust that there will be no further delay in doing so.

[38370]

No. 126.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 351.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 30, 1908.*

I TOLD Count Benckendorff to-day about an interview with Mr. Lynch and Lord Lamington at the House of Commons last evening.

They came to tell me that four Persians, who had been members of the Medjliss, had been conferring with a group of Members of Parliament of both Houses, and had complained bitterly of Russian intervention in Persian affairs, saying that Colonel Liakhoff was Military Governor of Tehran, and so forth. The four Persians were anxious to plead for non-intervention, and Mr. Lynch and Lord Lamington pressed me to see them.

I replied that during the last few months we had constantly received complaints as to the interference of Russian Agents in Persia against the Nationalist party. At the same time, the Russian Government had constantly received complaints as to the interference of British Agents in Persia in favour of the Nationalist party. I had expressly laid it down that bast was to be limited in such a way that it should not exercise political influence, and I had forbidden our Agents in Persia to interfere in internal affairs. I had urged the Russian Government to be equally careful in restricting the action of their Agents.

If I were to receive these four Persians, the fact would be exploited by them. It would be construed in Persia as political influence, and would enable every Russian Agent there to urge that something should be done by way of counter-action.

I had, therefore, definitely declined to see the four Persians.

I had also pointed out that the appointment of Colonel Liakhoff as Governor of Tehran had been cancelled by the desire of the Russian Government, as it exceeded the functions for which his services had been lent to the Shah.

Mr. Lynch and Lord Lamington had then pressed me to receive a deputation of Members of Parliament.

I had replied to this request by explaining to them the present situation. The Province of Azerbaijan was on the Russian frontier; Russian trade had suffered greatly; Russia was specially interested in the customs receipts owing to her loans, but for five months the customs had not been collected; a Russian post had been attacked; on at least one occasion the Russian Consul-General at Tabreez had reported that Russian lives were in danger; and about 200 Russian Caucasian revolutionaries hostile to the Russian Government were operating with the Nationalists at Tabreez. In spite of all this, as the fighting had ceased and the leader of the Nationalists had promised to protect foreigners, the Russian Government had not sent any troops over the border into Persian territory, and had stopped at the frontier those whom they had moved in that direction.

I had asked Mr. Lynch and Lord Lamington to imagine what would have happened had a parallel set of circumstances occurred in territory bordering as closely on the Indian frontier as Azerbaijan bordered on the Russian frontier; what questions would have been put to me in Parliament; and what pressure would have been put upon me to increase our Consular guard and to take other measures for the protection of our interests?

Having regard to these facts, I thought it undesirable and unnecessary that I should receive a deputation.

I told Count Benckendorff that no doubt the Persians who were here would work up some feeling on the subject. I therefore thought it well to tell him at once what had passed, and to point out to him how my hands had been strengthened by the fact that no Russian troops had crossed into Persia. If the matter was raised publicly, I felt confident that, by taking the same line in public as I had taken with Mr. Lynch and Lord Lamington in my interview with them, I could stop all serious agitation here, provided that no Russian troops entered Persia.

Count Benckendorff told me he heard the Russian military authorities were now strongly against armed intervention in Persia. This was because they had come to the conclusion that, if they were to intervene at all, they would be obliged to send a force of something like 15,000 men over the frontier.

I said that the largeness of the scale on which any armed intervention would have to be made in order to be effective had always seemed to me a very serious



consideration, and I was very glad to hear that the Russian military authorities were so much impressed by it.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) E. GREY.

[37847]

No. 127.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 31.)*

(No. 234.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St Petersburg, October 31, 1908.*

SITUATION at Tabreez.

The news which has been received here by the Russian Ministry for Foreign Affairs is not at all satisfactory, and is to the effect that serious loss is being caused to Russian trade, and M. Isvolsky gave me to understand yesterday that, though he was most anxious not to intervene in any way, it was difficult to allow things to go on indefinitely as they were. I informed him of the information contained in Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 355, which, while admitting that the Julfa road is interrupted, is to the effect that Tabreez itself is quite quiet. Could not some means perhaps be suggested by Sir G. Barclay or Mr. Wratislaw whereby the reopening of the trade route might be effected?

[37847]

No. 128.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 564.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 31, 1908.*

RUSSIAN intervention in Tabreez.

With reference to your telegram No. 234 of the 31st instant, I earnestly hope that some means may be found to avoid Russian intervention, as it would produce a very bad effect in this country.

While fully realizing how difficult the situation is, I am persuaded that it is only by inducing the Shah to carry out his promises that it would be possible to restore order.

You should tell the Minister for Foreign Affairs that I am prepared to send instructions to Mr. Wratislaw to join in exerting influence to maintain order at Tabreez, and to dissuade inhabitants from committing acts prejudicial to the interests of Russian trade. You should also ask his Excellency to give his consent to the identic communication telegraphed by Mr. Barclay, and also to the addition suggested by me in my telegram No. 559 of the 30th instant.

[36797]

No. 129.

*Foreign Office to Treasury.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 31, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant respecting the proposal for the permanent appointment of a Military Attaché to His Majesty's Consulate-General at Meshed, at a cost varying, according to the rank of the officer employed, from 574*l.* 8*s.* to 927*l.* 4*s.* a-year, to be borne equally between the Indian and Imperial Governments.

With regard to the second paragraph of your letter, I am to state, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, that the point to which you refer had already engaged the attention of the Secretary of State, and formed the subject of an inquiry addressed to the India Office in a letter dated the 14th May. That Department replied, however, in the following terms:—

"The suggestion in your letter that the duties at present performed by Captain Smyth should be discharged in future either by the Consul-General or the Vice-Consul at Meshed does not seem practicable. The latter officer is usually a member of the

Indian Medical Service, and does not possess the necessary technical qualifications. The Consul-General's duties do not afford him sufficient leisure to undertake the work. It was the insufficiency of the news supplied by the staff of the Consulate-General without the assistance of a special officer that led to the appointment of Captain Smyth."

In reply to the final paragraph of your letter, I am to inform you that the question to which you allude has not been lost sight of, though any reduction in the existing establishments in Persia would have to be effected gradually, and if possible in pursuance of an understanding with the Russian Government. Sir E. Grey trusts, however, that the appointment of a Military Attaché at Meshed may be considered on its merits, apart from the larger question; and, as inconvenience is caused by the strictly temporary footing on which the appointment is at present being continued, Sir E. Grey earnestly trusts that the appointment may be sanctioned, at the joint charge of the Indian and British Exchequers, for a period of, say, two years, the question of its continuance to be considered at the end of that period.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[37880]

No. 130.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 1.)*

(No. 235.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

*St. Petersburg, November 1, 1908.*

TEHRAN telegram No. 353: Identic Memorandum.

Russian Government propose after words "permit them to take part in elections" to omit the words "fixed for 27th October."

They would also propose after the words "finally to calm this province" to terminate Memorandum as follows: "to deign to accord to its population the grace which they have solicited, and, further, to grant on that occasion a general amnesty to all subjects of His Majesty who have been implicated ('mêlés') in the recent revolutionary movement."

Minister for Foreign Affairs entirely agrees with you as to the addendum mentioned in your telegram No. 559. He proposes that it should run as follows:—

"At the same time the Minister of Russia (Great Britain) is authorized by his Government to express his surprise at the delay which has occurred in the promulgation of the Electoral Law, and he hopes that His Majesty the Shah will fulfil his promises without loss of time."

(Sent to Tehran.)

[37847]

No. 131.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 308.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 1, 1908.*

TABREEZ.

Please refer to my telegram No. 307 and inform me, when you have consulted His Majesty's Consul-General from Tabreez (Mr. Wratislaw), of any suggestions which may occur to you.

[37926]

No. 132.

*Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 2.)*

(No. 693.)

Sir,

*Constantinople, October 23, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from Mr. Consul-General Wratislaw, at Urmi, to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, reporting on the situation on the Turco-Persian frontier.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) GERARD LOWTHER.

[1622]



Inclosure in No. 132.

Consul-General Wratislaw to Mr. Marling.

(No. 16.)

*Situation on Turco-Persian Frontier, Reduction of Forces, Renewed Kurdish Outrages.*

Sir,

Urmi, September 24, 1908.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 55 of to-day's date, I have the honour to report that during the last fortnight considerable reduction has been made in the strength of the Turkish troops along the frontier from Lahajan northwards. Owing to the complete interruption of communications with the south, I cannot supply details concerning Lahajan and Pasveh, but in Mergaver, Tergaver, and Baranduz only one battalion remains, under the command of a Binbashi. The six guns formerly in Tergaver were removed towards the west of Baradost a fortnight ago, and are supposed to have been taken thence to Van. In Somai and Charik I hear that only one company, or at most only two are left. Only a handful of soldiers are believed to remain in Baradost.

Yaver Pasha quitted Tergaver ten days ago, and is believed to have gone to Van. The district is well rid of this rascal, who certainly instigated the Kurdish raid last June, and whose corruption is a scandal even to the Turkish army. Before leaving he summoned the leading Harkai and Begzadeh Kurds before him, and told them that the orders were that they should annex no more Persian territory, but that they should repulse by force any attempt on the part of the Persians to regain what was already occupied.

On the 21st instant some Turkish soldiers, accompanied by Kerkai Kurds, advanced as far as Dizel, in the Baranduz district. The Persian Cossack Colonel who commands the small Persian garrison in the neighbouring village of Baranduz, accordingly visited Dizel, in order to ascertain with his own eyes whether the Turks were really there, and having done so returned to Baranduz. Thereupon the Binbashi wrote him a furious letter, accusing him of "violating Turkish territory," and asking him whether he wanted to fight. The Persian applied to Muhteshem-es-Sultaneh for instructions, and the latter asked my opinion as to the advisability of resisting by force any further Turkish aggression in that district. I told him that it would be the height of folly to risk a collision with the Turks just as the Turkish Government showed some sign of a disposition to settle the frontier question. Saatlu, near Dizerteke, in the same district has also been visited lately by a party of Turkish soldiers. Their renewed activity is probably prompted by a desire to collect as much in the way of taxes as they can while opportunity offers.

On the 22nd instant some Turkish soldiers called at the village of Sairlan, near Kutahi, in Anzel, and threatened the inhabitants with condign punishment unless they submitted to Omer Agha, the Shekoik Chief, whom the Turks have put in charge of the district.

The same district of Anzel has been exposed during the past fortnight to renewed depredations on the part of the Shekoik Kurds of Somai. These began with the plunder of a caravan near Kutchi, from which twenty-three loads of sugar were taken. On the 17th instant the outgoing post from Urmi to Tabreez was attacked by Somai Kurds, the whole outfit including cart-horses and letters carried off, and two travellers killed. The same thing happened to the incoming post from Tabreez this morning, which was captured near the village of Kulungi, by Somai Kurds, aided by the inhabitants of Kulungi and other Sunni villages. The Turks who are in occupation of Somai must have connived at this outrage. Nothing is known here of the whereabouts of the Turkish Commissioners who left Urmi four weeks ago, promising to return in a fortnight; and with Ramazan so near, it seems unlikely that they will reappear in the immediate future.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

[37940]

No. 133.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 2.)

(No. 708.)

Sir,

Therapia, October 26, 1908.

AS soon as internal matters seemed to be taking a more settled form after Kiamil Pasha's appointment as Grand Vizier, I began, in conjunction with the Persian Ambassador, to urge on the new Cabinet the necessity of rectifying, without delay, the very irregular position on the sections of the Persian frontier bordering on the Vilayets of Van and Mosul, by withdrawing the large bodies of Turkish troops dispatched there under the old Palace régime, especially those stationed at Pasveh, Anzel, Baranduz, &c., situated to the east of the contested zone.

Kiamil Pasha expressed a sincere desire to regularize the position, and had the matter considered at a meeting of the new Cabinet, where it was decided to withdraw the bulk of the forces forthwith. The Cabinet was unable to deal with the matter in detail, owing to the fact that the maps and quantities of documents of importance had been abstracted by the Palace. At the request of the Persian Ambassador, the above decision was communicated in writing to the Persian Embassy, and I have the honour to forward a literal translation of the Turkish *note verbale*, the wording of which is somewhat ambiguous. It is not clear from the Turkish text whether it was intended to maintain at Pasveh "a sufficient number of the battalions stationed" there, or to maintain in the frontier region, for the preservation of the *status quo*, a sufficient number of the battalions then stationed at Pasveh. The Persian Embassy consequently sent a note in reply, dated the 2nd ultimo, of which I also inclose a copy.

In pursuance of the decision of the Council of Ministers above referred to, three battalions were withdrawn from the Pasveh-Lahijan region, leaving some four battalions, as reported in my telegram No. 278 of the 28th ultimo, to garrison the frontier. Of these, one battalion remained at Pasveh, east of the contested zone. Similarly, as stated in my telegram No. 280 of the 29th ultimo, some five battalions and one mountain battery were withdrawn from the Van section of the frontier, while Mr. Wratislaw, in his No. 16 of the 24th ultimo, sent from Urumia to Tehran, reports that only one battalion remained in Mergavar, Tergavar, and Baranduz, one or two companies at Somai and Charik, and a handful of Turkish troops in Baradost. It appears that these units are considerably below their normal strength, and that they are stationed at Mavana, Charik, &c., situated on the eastern edge of the contested zone, the only Turkish troops stationed actually east of the zone being the battalion at Pasveh.

From time to time during the past three weeks I have urged the Porte, which has been fully occupied with the Balkan and internal situation, to have the Persian boundary examined in detail, with a view to the withdrawal of the above-mentioned forces within the line represented by the *status quo* of some three years ago, i.e., before the occupation of Vezneh and Pasveh. A Commission has been formed at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which, with the assistance of two staff officers and an unofficial Delegate from the Persian Embassy, is endeavouring to examine the merits of this question, so complicated by the irresponsible interference of the Palace during the last three years, and it is to be hoped that the result of its labours will lead to the restoration of the *status quo* of 1905.

In the present unsettled state of things in Persia and Turkey anything like actual delimitation is out of the question, and even after a stable form of government has been established in both countries, a definite solution of the boundary question must be a matter of years; for, granted that both Governments are animated with the honest intention of arriving at a settlement, it would require lengthy negotiations upon a basis of delimitation, while, after this result has been attained, a proper and detailed survey of the whole region from Mohammerah to Mount Ararat would have to be carried out before the demarcation of such an extensive boundary, with its network of nomad and unsettled tribes, could be carried out.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) GERARD LOWTHER.



Inclosure 1 in No. 133.

Note verbale communicated by Tewfik Pasha to the Persian Embassy at Constantinople.

August 20, 1324 (6th Shaban, 1326)  
(September 3, 1908).

(Literal translation.)

IN view of the near approach of winter, and the absence of suitable accommodation for the Imperial troops in the Mergavar, Tergavar, Lahijan, Merghian Vezné, and Serdesht districts, on the Persian border, it became necessary, while maintaining a sufficient number of the battalions stationed at Pasveh to insure the preservation of the *status quo*, to send the remainder back to their head-quarters, and to adopt the same course as regards the troops in the districts of Tergavar and Mergavar, after leaving there a suitable number of frontier detachments; and as there is no intention of committing aggressions or encroachments on Persian territory, troops now stationed or subsequently to be stationed in the vicinity of the Persian border are destined solely to maintain the *status quo*, a decision of the Council of Ministers on these lines has been come to, and has received the sanction of an Imperial Iradé. I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the necessary instructions in consequence have been sent to the proper quarters.

(Signed) TEWFIK,  
Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Inclosure 2 in No. 133.

Note communicated by the Persian Embassy to Tewfik Pasha.

(Translation.)

19th Shaban, 1326 (September 2, 1324).

THIS Embassy, having been assured that the evacuation of Peshova and other points which form part of Persian territory, and the recall of the Ottoman troops to the Turkish side of the frontier had been decided on, communicated the intelligence by telegraph to the Persian Government.

The Embassy has just been informed by a telegram from Mehteshem-es-Saltana, President of the Persian Boundary Commission, that not only have these places not been evacuated, but all the crops of the inhabitants have been seized.

As it is evident that such conduct is contrary to the assurances this Embassy has received, and to good relations between two great States connected by the tie of Islam, this Embassy has the honour to request that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will do its utmost to have telegraphic messages sent to the proper quarter to effect a speedy evacuation of the places in question, and to communicate the result to this Embassy, that it may announce it to the Persian Government.

The Embassy seizes this opportunity to assure the Ministry of its highest respect.

[38009]

No. 134.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 2.)

(No. 471.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, October 24, 1908.

M. TCHARYKOFF informed me the night before last that a telegram had been received from the Commander-in-chief at Tiflis denying in the most positive manner that any Cossacks had crossed the Persian frontier. His Excellency said that he trusted that the British Acting Consul-General at Tabreez would be admonished to be more careful in the reports which he sent as to Russian military movements, as he had caused a good deal of unnecessary trouble both to the Ministry of War and to that of Foreign Affairs by telegraphing reports which were subsequently proved to be unfounded.

M. Tcharykoff added that, having heard that Colonel Ouchakoff had left Tehran for Kasvin for the purpose of paying the Cossacks, peremptory orders had been sent to him to return at once to the former place; and M. de Hartwig had again received

positive instructions that no Russian officer was to leave Tehran. M. Tcharykoff said that the Russian Government were determined that their orders should be punctually and faithfully obeyed.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[38010]

No. 135.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 2.)

(No. 475.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, October 25, 1908.

M. TCHARYKOFF asked me to call upon him this morning, and he informed me that the Emperor had desired that he should speak to me in regard to the misleading telegrams which had recently been sent by the "Times" correspondent at Tehran. This gentleman, he said, was a Persian subject, and had been a member of one of the most advanced Enjumens, and apparently wished to sow distrust between Russia and Great Britain in regard to Persian affairs. The special point to which His Majesty had ordered him to draw my attention was to a telegram which had been sent by the correspondent announcing that Colonel—or, to speak more correctly, Captain—Ouchakoff had left Tehran for Tabreez to take command of the Cossacks who were to operate against the latter town. On Sir G. Barclay having informed him that this news was inaccurate, the correspondent had not contradicted his former intelligence, but had simply sent a second telegram to the effect that Captain Ouchakoff had not yet left Tehran, leaving it to be inferred that his journey to Tabreez had been merely postponed. Captain Ouchakoff had gone to Kasvin, not to Tabreez, for the purpose of paying his detachment, and had been ordered back (as I knew) to Tehran.

M. Tcharykoff said that on a former occasion His Majesty's Government had caused some warning to be conveyed to the correspondent to be more careful in the reports which he sent home; but it was vexatious that, when both Governments were doing their best to remove all misunderstandings and to co-operate cordially together, newspapers of the importance of the "Times" should receive inaccurate intelligence which gave the impression that Russia was not acting straightforwardly in the matter of non-intervention in Persian affairs. As the Emperor had taken special notice of the case, he hoped I would do something towards remedying matters.

I told M. Tcharykoff that of course any wish which His Majesty expressed would receive immediate attention from me, and that I would lay the matter before you. I added that it was a little difficult to influence newspapers in any way, but the "Times" editorial staff were, I personally was aware, staunch advocates of a good understanding with Russia, and it might be possible for a private hint to be conveyed to them.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[38011]

No. 136.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 2.)

(No. 478.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, October 27, 1908.

SIR G. BARCLAY was good enough to communicate by telegraph to me his telegram to you giving the text of the identic Memorandum which he and M. de Hartwig proposed should be addressed by them to the Shah, respecting the elections at Tabreez and an amnesty to all those who were recently in arms against the forces of the Persian Government. As I was paying a visit to M. Tcharykoff this morning, I inquired whether he had received the text of the Memorandum and, if so, what he thought of it. He replied that he knew that a Memorandum was in process of preparation, but he had not received the text. I therefore read it to him; and he observed that he would ask M. de Hartwig by telegraph to send him the text as he would like to study it. At first sight it seemed to him undesirable and unnecessary that the elections should be held simultaneously at Tabreez and in the other parts of the country. After what had passed he thought that there would be no harm in allowing Tabreez to wait a little, say for a week or two. The peaceable inhabitants had, he knew, addressed a telegram to the Shah and they had been probably mere instruments of the Caucasian revolutionaries during the

[1622]



recent fighting. If left to themselves they would probably have long ago come to terms with the Government forces. He had nothing to say against them; but there were the Caucasian revolutionaries, and it was not in the interests of the Russian Government that these men should imagine that having organized and been the backbone of the rising they could obtain with facility any terms they might desire.

I pointed out to M. Tcharykoff that if the elections were really being held on the 27th October, that is to-day, in Persia there must necessarily be some delay before the inhabitants of Tabreez exercised their electoral rights; and, moreover, the revolutionaries to whom he alluded had not, I imagined, the franchise, and that therefore the holding of the elections would not affect them.

M. Tcharykoff said that he did not believe that the right of voting was very carefully scrutinized in Persia. Probably anyone delivered his vote without any question being asked as to whether he was entitled to do so. But the Russian Government had to consider what effect would be produced in the Caucasus, if concessions were immediately made at Tabreez. The British Government were in the fortunate position of being able to take a detached view of the matter, but it was not so with the Russian Government, especially as the intercourse between Azerbaijan and the Caucasus was frequent and close. There had been a constant going to and fro between the two provinces, and the revolutionaries on both sides of the border were in intimate touch. The Russian Government had now taken measures which they hoped would check this incessant passing over the frontier from one side to the other. Moreover, although he quite understood that the immediate holding of elections at Tabreez was intended as a calming measure, still as there were no Government troops within 100 or 200 miles of Tabreez, and as it was not likely that Ain-ed-Dowleh would be in a hurry to renew his military exploits, there was breathing time left.

He was, however, he said, merely expressing preliminary opinions and he would wait for the text of the Memorandum, and after having studied it, would inform me of the modifications which he might deem to be advisable.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[38012]

No. 137.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 2.)*

(No. 479.)  
Sir,

*St. Petersburg, October 27, 1908.*

IN accordance with the instructions conveyed to me in your telegram No. 546 of yesterday's date, I took occasion to inform M. Tcharykoff that inquiries had been made as to the authority on which the Acting Consul-General at Tabreez had announced that a certain number of Russian Cossacks had crossed the Persian frontier with arms and ammunition. It appeared that the fact of the Cossacks having arrived at Julfa had been ascertained by Mr. Stevens through the custom-house, and that the report that they had actually crossed the frontier seemed to have been derived from general information current in Tabreez. I admitted that it would have been more prudent if the latter and more important item of information had been verified before being telegraphed as a fact; but in any case I was commissioned by you to express the regret of His Majesty's Government that inaccurate information had been sent.

M. Tcharykoff said that he was most grateful for the courteous and friendly message which I had been instructed to deliver, and he expressed his sincere thanks to you. He asked if I had seen a telegram in the "Frankfurter Zeitung" that six Russian battalions had crossed the frontier. I replied in the affirmative, and also that I had noticed that the Telegraph Agency had been authorized to characterize the statement as a pure invention. He observed that the news of the "Frankfurter Zeitung" was evidently *tendancieux*, and he had hesitated whether it was worth while giving it a denial.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[37882]

No. 138.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 2.)*

(No. 237.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 2, 1908.*

PERSIA. Your telegram No. 564 of the 31st ultimo.

This evening I mentioned the situation at Tabreez to M. Isvolsky. He says that he will not move any force unless protection is imperatively called for, and he promised me that, if such an occasion should arise, he would let me know before taking action. He said that owing to the serious losses which Russian trade was suffering he was being strongly pressed to take action of some sort, but that it was his intention to abstain from doing so. He really thought that very great forbearance had been shown by Russia in this matter. Unless Russian subjects are attacked, I do not think any movement will be made by Russian Government.

[38424]

No. 139.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 570.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 2, 1908.*

ANGLO-RUSSIAN relations.

(The following is for use, entirely at your discretion, at your audience with the Czar.)

Much has been done to inspire confidence on this side by M. Isvolsky's visit to London and the frank conversation we had together. Our desire to co-operate with Russia has been encouraged and strengthened by the fact that we experienced no difficulty in approaching the crisis in the Near East from the same standpoint when it burst upon us without warning.

Criticism, it is true, was provoked in the press by the action taken in the summer by Colonel Liakhoff, and an endeavour is made to draw capital out of this by some Persians who are now here. I have, however, been enabled to resist the agitation by reason of the attitude of restraint exhibited on the Persian frontier, in spite of considerable provocation, by Russia, whereby an impression of confidence is being created in the press.

[37882]

No. 140.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 571.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 2, 1908.*

PERSIA: Situation at Tabreez.

Please refer to your telegram No. 237 of the 2nd instant.

The Russian Government have shown great forbearance, and His Majesty's Government are fully appreciative of their moderation. They hope most sincerely that Russian Government will not be compelled to take action, but have learnt with gratification that Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs has promised to inform you if such a course becomes absolutely necessary.

[37880]

No. 141.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 309.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 2, 1908.*

WHEN similar instructions have reached your Russian colleague, you may present to the Shah the identic Memorandum as drafted in your telegram No. 353 of the 26th ultimo, with the addition and alterations indicated in the telegram No. 235 from St. Petersburg of the 1st instant.



[37847]

No. 142.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 310.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 2, 1908.*

WITH regard to the situation in Tabreez, I authorize you to send instructions to British Consulate-General at that town as set forth in the last paragraph of my telegram to Sir A. Nicolson, No. 564 of the 31st ultimo.

[38316]

No. 143.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 3.)*

(No. 239.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 3, 1908.*

PERSIA. My telegram No. 238 of to-day (the 3rd November).

At the audience accorded to me to-day by the Czar I spoke on the subject of Persia, and said that the forbearance shown by Russia was fully recognized by His Majesty's Government and was having a good effect on the press of Great Britain. In this latter connection I instanced an article in yesterday's "Times," of which the substance had been telegraphed to St. Petersburg. I remarked that some misgivings had been caused by Colonel Liakhoff's action, and His Majesty replied that he was confident that that officer, whom he knew well, would obey faithfully the strict instructions which had now reached him and which would avoid any future unpleasantness. The double position of Instructor of the Cossack Brigade and Commander of the Shah's Bodyguard held by Colonel Liakhoff had, His Majesty explained, placed that officer in a difficulty. His Majesty declared that he was determined to carry out loyally the provisions of the Convention, both in Persia and with regard to Afghanistan.

[38430]

No. 144.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 4.)*

(No. 240.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 4, 1908.*

PERSIA. With reference to the identic Memorandum to the Shah, which your telegram No. 309 of the 2nd November to Tehran authorizes Sir G. Barclay to present, similar instructions have now been sent to the Russian Minister at Tehran by the Russian Government.

[38402]

No. 145.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 4.)*

(No. 358.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 4, 1908.*

PRESENT condition of the Julfa road. Your telegram No. 308 of the 1st instant.

I have received a telegram from Mr. Stevens reporting that the son of the late Shuja Nizam still continues to annoy travellers and caravans without completely stopping them. He has proclaimed himself Governor of Marand, but gives out that he has been appointed by the Shah. Owing to the brigandage of the Maku horsemen the road to Erzerum is also blocked. The Manager of the Julfa road would like the Russian troops to cross the frontier to protect his road, and the anxiety of the Russian colony still continues.

Mr. Stevens suggests that matters at Marand might be improved if a strong telegram were sent by the Shah.

M. de Hartwig and I will make energetic representations this afternoon through the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Of course it is possible that the Shah is promoting disorders in the hope of Russia intervening.

[38428]

No. 146.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 4.)*

(No. 359.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 4, 1908.*

TABREEZ situation and the Julfa road.

My telegram No. 358 of to-day's date. M. de Hartwig and I asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon whether the men who were stopping the roads in the neighbourhood of Tabreez were acting under the Shah's orders, and urged that His Majesty should telegraph to restrain them from this interference with trade if this were the case.

Ala-es-Sultaneh replied that he could not reply to our inquiry officially until he had conveyed our message to His Majesty, but he expressed the belief that the Shah, wishing to punish the town of Tabreez, had ordered the roads to be stopped. His Highness added confidentially that he deprecated such measures, but he maintained that in order to prevent the entry into Tabreez of revolutionaries from the Caucasus, bombs, &c., it was necessary to examine passengers and goods on the roads.

[38428]

No. 147.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 576.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 4, 1908.*

RUSSIAN officers in Persia (see Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 359 of to-day).

Though we cannot propose such a course to the Russian Government unless they afford us an opportunity to do so, it is probable that all the trouble would be ended by a threat on their part that, unless the Shah fulfilled his promise of proceeding with a constitution and ceased to obstruct trade, the Russian officers would be withdrawn from his service.

[36798]

No. 148.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 313.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 4, 1908.*

GUARDS for Oil Syndicate's posts.

Please refer to my telegram No. 302. During next hot season it will not be necessary, in Mr. D'Arcy's opinion, for Indian guard to be retained. The conduct of the Bakhtiaris has, he says, been good; and the only thing needed is that they should be informed that their good behaviour is responsible for the guard having been withdrawn, and that, provided it remains so, it will not be necessary to reinstate the guard.

[38402]

No. 149.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 315.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 4, 1908.*

TABREEZ. In your telegram No. 358 of to-day Acting Consul-General suggests that a "strong telegram" should be sent, but it is not clear to me to whom it is to be addressed. I should be glad to know what has become of Mr. Wratislaw. You should ask M. Hartwig whether, if he is in communication with his Consul-General at Urumia, he could find out.



[38476]

No. 150.

*Sir Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 5.)*

(No. 360.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 5, 1908.*

SITUATION at Tabreez. In reply to your telegram No. 315 of the 4th instant. Mr. Stevens clearly means that "a strong telegram" should be addressed to the men of the late Shuja Nizam. Mr. Stevens' words are: "a strong telegram to those who are causing annoyance at Maraud."

M. de Hartwig has already inquired about Mr. Wratislaw, as he is in communication with Urumia through Tabreez. His Excellency has promised to let me know as soon as he has any news.

The Russian courier who should have reached Urumia on the 1st instant, took another letter from Mr. Stevens to Mr. Wratislaw, so that the latter should by now be well on his way to Tabreez.

[38487]

No. 151.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 5.)*

(No. 361.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 5, 1908.*

SITUATION at Tabreez.

His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Tabreez reports that he has had an interview with the Russian Consul-General, who agrees that there is no danger to foreigners, and admits that caravans are now passing between Julfa and Tabreez. Latter further states that he has reported to Tehran that business is being resumed and that the town is perfectly quiet.

Mr. Stevens and his Russian colleague are agreed that a good effect would be produced by a strong telegram from the Shah to the Shuja Nizam's son at Maraud.

The joint representation which M. de Hartwig and I made yesterday through the Minister for Foreign Affairs was intended to cover the men of Maku and Maraud, and it seems to me that we might now wait for the result of it.

[38428]

No. 152.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 578.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 5, 1908.*

ANY proposal on our part relative to the Russian officers at Tehran might possibly be misconstrued by the Russian Government, and I am not sure that it would be advisable for us to propose that they should threaten to withdraw their protection from the Shah, though this would be apparently the best course to adopt with regard to him.

[38617]

No. 153.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 6.)*

Sir,

*India Office, November 4, 1908.*

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo regarding—

1. The conditions of the Mining Concession on the Island of Sirri for which the local agent of Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co. is about to apply to the Persian Government.

2. The feasibility of supporting an application by Messrs. Strick for the Sirri Concession concurrently with that of Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co.

As regards the second point, the semi-official communications to which you refer are presumably those in connection with the letter of the 23rd October sent by Mr. Wilson Fox to Mr. Strick in accordance with the views, conveyed semi-officially,

of the Foreign Office. The terms of that letter do not appear inconsistent with the instructions to Mr. Marling, in Sir E. Grey's telegram No. 266 of the 19th September, that, in view of the assurances received, the agent of Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co. should be informed "that no objection would be taken by His Majesty's Government to his application." At the same time Lord Morley does not consider that Messrs. Strick's application, should they decide to make one, could be supported actively to the detriment of that of Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co., though if the Persian Government, in the exercise of their discretion, were to prefer to accept the offer of the former we should not be under any obligation, through the form of the pledge given to the latter, to interpose a veto.

The general policy to be pursued in regard to the question of oxide in the Gulf appears to be governed by two considerations: (1) to promote British interests by keeping the business, including the conveyance of the oxide to Europe, in British hands; (2) to prevent the Hormuz Concession, held by the Moin-ut-Tujar, and any other Concessions that may hereafter be granted, being worked for the benefit of foreign commerce to the political and commercial detriment of British interests.

The second of these objects would be attained, so far as Hormuz is concerned, if the British Company contemplated by Mr. Ellinger could be formed. Failing this, it seems desirable to secure, if possible, for British commerce an alternative source of supply of oxide, of similar quality to that from Hormuz, so as to deprive the Moin of the advantage of his present position as a monopolist. From this point of view it would be unfortunate if Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co., on obtaining the Sirri Concession, were to work it in co-operation with the Moin and in subordination to the interests of his Hormuz Concession.

As regards the first point in your letter, the conditions of the Concession sought by Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co., I am to say that Lord Morley is of opinion that Sir G. Barclay's proposal should be approved, and that the Persian Government should be informed that "the grant of a Concession to an applicant not approved by His Majesty's Government would lead to the assertion by them of the claims of the Joasmi Chief," with the addition of a statement to the effect that "it must be clearly understood that such conditions as may be attached to the Concession shall not prejudice the question of the disputed status of the island."

I am to add that it might be desirable to ascertain what is suggested as to the period for which the Concession should run, and as to the conditions, if any, on which it may be renewed.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[38658]

No. 154.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 6.)*

(No. 243.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 6, 1908.*

PERSIA. Your telegram No. 578 of to-day.

To suggest that the Russian officers should be temporarily withdrawn would be a very delicate matter, but if no effect is produced by the identic Memorandum and the representations subsequently made with regard to trade routes, I might sound M. Isvolsky very cautiously as to the possibility of further measures and the form they might take.

[38658]

No. 155.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 581.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 6, 1908.*

THE course of action which you suggest in your telegram No. 243 of to-day's date meets with my approval.

Under the present circumstances the Shah, so long as he considers it certain that Russia will continue to afford him protection, will continue to take no notice of our joint representations. This being the case, the Russians alone can influence him,



though we cannot expect them to adopt any means for this end by which their influence at the Persian capital would be permanently weakened. I think, however, that Russia's position, in the eyes of the better section of public opinion in Persia, would be strengthened by the judicious exercise of their influence with the Shah.

[38806]

No. 156.

*Memoranda communicated by Mr. Wilson Fox (Board of Trade), November 7, 1908.*

I SAW Mr. Strick on Friday, the 30th October, for a few minutes. I told him that I was expecting Mr. Ellinger to call on me early in the following week, and that I should be glad to know what his (Mr. Strick's) views were as to the formation of a Company for the acquisition of iron oxide on Ormuz.

Mr. Strick gave me to understand that he was not favourable to joining a Company, though he did not actually say that he would not. I then said that I thought, if it were found possible to get up a Company, that he might well consider whether he could not come to terms with Mr. Ellinger on the lines of the negotiations in July and August last, namely, that Mr. Strick should buy, at 42s. 6d. a-ton, 20,000 tons, over a period of two and a-half years. I told him that this might be his last chance of acquiring the Ormuz oxide, and I expressed the hope that he would consider the matter very carefully. I asked him to think over the terms on which he would buy the Ormuz oxide, so that he would be prepared to discuss the matter on a practical basis with Mr. Ellinger.

I added that, if he refused the Ormuz oxide now, there was some danger of the business going to Germany, and that he might never get a similar chance again.

I ended the conversation by suggesting that I should ask Mr. Ellinger to call on Mr. Strick in order that they might discuss the whole, and Mr. Strick agreed to see Mr. Ellinger for this purpose if he called.

(Signed) A. WILSON FOX.

October 31, 1908.

Mr. Ellinger called upon me to-day (the 2nd November) at the Board of Trade. I informed him that during his absence abroad I had seen Mr. Strick on two occasions, and that he did not seem very anxious to take part in a Company in connection with the acquisition of the iron oxide in Ormuz. At the same time, I added that Mr. Strick had never said that he would not join a Company. I said that I thought that Mr. Strick would probably prefer to make a contract himself with the Mouin, if suitable terms were offered him.

I reminded Mr. Ellinger that Mr. Strick had been willing to give the Mouin the price he asked for the oxide, namely, 42s. 6d. a ton, but that he could not agree to some of the other stipulations, and what he specially objected to was the absence of any guarantee as to the quality of the oxide.

I told Mr. Ellinger that Mr. Strick was the obvious person to come to terms with if he could. In the first place, Mr. Strick owns ships, and therefore, as he would get profit from the freight as well as from the sale of oxide, he would be in a better position to offer favourable terms than any one else; secondly, he was an expert in dealing with oxide and knew where to get a market; thirdly, Mr. Strick was a dangerous opponent to have against him, and as every one always consulted him in all matters relating to oxide, he could probably prevent the formation of a Company, or possibly ruin one if established.

Mr. Ellinger agreed with me that it would be better for him to make terms with Mr. Strick if possible, and he also appeared to agree with the view that Mr. Strick could probably stop a Company being formed if he chose to do so. He wanted to know how far I could help him in the City by bringing the scheme to the notice of some financiers.

I replied—

1. That at present there was no practical scheme to put before any one, and that if Mr. Ellinger wanted to raise any money, he must get something definite on paper; something which City men would really consider seriously: some information from an expert point of view as to the amount of oxide on Ormuz, the quality, and the prospect of 120,000 tons of oxide of this quality being obtainable during the next twenty years; also, the cost of getting the oxide to England, the probable selling price per ton, the

profit to be made, &c.; also, if possible, to give the names of some supporters of the scheme.

2. That if I showed a document drawn up by Mr. Ellinger to any financiers in the City, they would have to consider it entirely on its merits from a business point of view; that I was not a Company promoter, neither could the Board of Trade take up such a position; also, if Mr. Strick did not join the Company I should feel bound to point this out, because by not so doing I should be concealing a very material fact, as the hostility of Mr. Strick to a Company would be a real danger.

I asked Mr. Ellinger how much capital he could raise in Manchester, and to my surprise he replied that he did not think that he could raise any. I was under the impression that when he was suggesting forming a Company earlier in the year he had some Manchester backing. It is pretty clear that he knows no one of any financial standing in the City of London, and that his hopes of raising money rested on the prospect of obtaining assurances from the Government and using them as a proof of the security of the investment. He also had got it into his mind that the Government would never let the business go to Germany. I told him that I doubted if the Germans were such reckless people as to buy oxide at a fancy figure for a long term of years, and also run the risk of having the business ruined by Strick's competition, for assuredly if Strick let Ormuz go it would be because he thought that he could successfully compete in the near future by some means or other.

I then took Mr. Ellinger over the terms of the Mouin's offer, and I think I convinced him that they were untenable—that no business man would look at them. Mr. Ellinger said that he was very anxious to discuss what terms would be acceptable in the City. I told him that under the Mouin's present terms he must bear in mind that the possible profit to the investor was only 10 per cent.—nothing like a sufficient inducement, having regard to the risks to be run under the Mouin's terms; that the capital asked for to start with was far too large; that the quality of the oxide must be guaranteed; and that the Mouin would have to suggest better terms in other particulars.

I added that if a Company cannot be got up the next best thing to do was for him to try to get Mr. Strick to make the arrangement discussed in July and August, namely, that Mr. Strick should buy 20,000 tons over a period of two and a-half years at 42s. 6d. a-ton.

I also indicated that possibly he might join hands with Mr. Strick and sell the oxide, giving the Mouin a share of the profits or a royalty, Mr. Strick also having the freight.

He also raised the question of "assurances" to the Mouin. I said that, so far as the assurances given by the Foreign Office in regard to the Company suggested in the spring of this year, I had no reason to suppose that they would not apply to any Company promoted now, though I could give no definite statement on that point; that, so far as assurances to secure the personal safety of the Mouin and his sons went, I could say nothing, that being entirely a matter outside my knowledge and province.

I however expressed the opinion that I thought that it would be time enough to raise the question of assurances when Mr. Ellinger was more certain whether it would be possible to get up a Company at all.

Mr. Ellinger subsequently left to call on Mr. Strick in the City, and is to see me again at noon to-morrow (Tuesday).

(Signed) A. WILSON FOX.

November 2, 1908.

Mr. Ellinger called upon me at the Board of Trade on Tuesday, the 3rd November. He had previously called on Mr. Strick, who appears to have told him that he was not disposed to go into Mr. Ellinger's proposed Company. Mr. Ellinger told me that one of the reasons given was that it was for too long a period (twenty years). But this is by no means the main reason. Mr. Strick thinks that the terms offered are generally much too onerous—a "wild-cat" scheme, as he described it to me on the telephone—and further, the inducements offered to Mr. Strick to participate are not good enough for him.

Mr. Ellinger agreed with me that he did not think that a Company could be got up if Mr. Strick did not participate, but he threw out the suggestion that His Majesty's Government might find some money. I told him to dismiss this idea from his mind, and that if he wanted to get British money for this enterprise it must be on a business



basis. I reminded him that the Foreign Office had shown considerable interest in the matter, and had, earlier in the year, given certain assurances, and that this would certainly be of value if the proposal made by the Mouin was one that could be entertained by British investors.

I then told Mr. Ellinger that if the formation of a Company was impossible, he had better concentrate on making an agreement with Mr. Strick. He said that he had discussed this with Mr. Strick, and that he did not think that an agreement was impossible. He thought that Mr. Strick might take between 20,000 and 30,000 tons of oxide at 42s. 6d. a-ton if the other terms were suitable. He asked me what inducement there was for the Mouin to make a contract with Mr. Strick instead of selling, as he was at present, to the highest bidders. I replied that, in the first place, the Mouin would know exactly what his revenue would be from the oxide for two and a-half or three years; and secondly, I thought that the Shah would find it very difficult to seize the Mouin's property if there was a *bona fide* contract existing between him and a British subject.

Mr. Ellinger seemed anxious that the Foreign Office and India Office should know that difficulties had arisen in connection with the formation of the Company, and he added that he thought they might be able to find some money to put into the Company. I again said that I thought they would not do so, but as he expressed the wish to see Sir Richmond Ritchie, I went over to the India Office with him and saw Sir R. Ritchie.

At the India Office I informed Sir R. Ritchie that Mr. Strick was indisposed to go into a Company; that the terms offered by the Mouin were not considered good enough by business men, and, generally, that it was very improbable whether a Company could be got up without Mr. Strick's co-operation. But I added that there was still some hope that Mr. Ellinger and Mr. Strick might come to terms upon the basis of the negotiations which took place between them in July and August last.

Mr. Ellinger then raised the point about Government monetary assistance towards the formation of a Company, and we held out no hope of this. I said that the British commercial interests abroad were so vast that if the Government took to putting money into enterprises which business men would not take up on a commercial basis, there would be no end to the demands for such action on their part. I added that if the Government adopted such a policy they would, moreover, have to appoint agents or nominate representatives as Directors of Companies to see that the business was being managed properly and their money expended in the right way.

Mr. Ellinger said that he thought that the Government might help, as they are anxious to get up the Company. But Sir R. Ritchie reminded Mr. Ellinger that the proposal came from him to the Foreign Office early this year; that it was he who suggested the Company and asked for assurances, and that it was when the negotiations with Mr. Ellinger and Mr. Strick broke down in the summer that a further consideration of the Company was suggested. We again reminded Mr. Ellinger that the Foreign Office had already given him a good deal of support in this matter.

Mr. Ellinger thought that something might be done with Mr. Strick in the direction of a contract, and he told me subsequently that he would write to Mr. Strick and make a proposal.

(Signed) A. WILSON FOX.

November 3, 1908.

I saw Mr. Strick on Wednesday evening, the 4th November, at the Board of Trade. I informed him that I understood from Mr. Ellinger that he was not disposed to join a Company for the acquisition of iron oxide in Ormuz. I also said that I had told Mr. Ellinger that I thought it unlikely that he could get up a Company without Mr. Strick's support, and that, in any event, it was pretty certain that he could not do so unless the present terms offered by the Mouin were considerably modified. I added that I had told Mr. Ellinger that if a Company could not be got up, the best thing to do was for him and Mr. Strick to come to terms, if possible on the lines of the proposals put forward in July and August last. I also informed Mr. Strick that Mr. Ellinger told me before we parted that he would make a proposal to Mr. Strick in writing on those lines.

Mr. Strick again informed me that he would not take part in Mr. Ellinger's proposed Company, and I then asked him if he would consider very carefully whether he could not take 20,000 tons of oxide at 42s. 6d. a-ton, to be delivered within a period of about two and a-half years. I pointed out that if he let this opportunity go he might not get

another, adding that I did not know how much risk there was of the business going to the Germans, but of course there was some risk.

Mr. Strick said he had thought very carefully over the matter that there might be some little risk in the Germans getting the business; but he was prepared to face that, because he firmly believed that Mr. Ellinger and the Mouin were "in a hole," and he thought that they would have to come to him presently if he waited his time.

Mr. Strick said that he had sold most of the stock he himself had in England to be delivered to customers in America, extending over the next twelve months; that Mr. Ellinger had 3,500 tons in England at the present time, and he thought that he had probably either advanced money on this to the Mouin or had raised it for him. Mr. Ellinger had also got 1,500 tons in Germany on which money had probably been advanced, and in addition the Mouin had 10,000 tons in Ormuz ready to sell. Now, as the world's annual demand for Ormuz oxide is only 6,000 to 8,000 tons, according to Mr. Strick's estimate the Mouin and Mr. Ellinger have 15,000 tons on hand they want to sell now, on some of which money has probably been advanced. In addition, Mr. Strick arranged for the sale of, I believe, some 3,000 tons in America during the next twelve months. Therefore, according to Mr. Strick, the Mouin has a good deal more on his hands than he can sell at the present time, and Mr. Ellinger may be in a very awkward position if he has advanced money to the Mouin on the consignments already shipped to this country and to Germany. Mr. Strick said that he should not be surprised if the Mouin threw over Mr. Ellinger.

In these circumstances, I fail to see how anything more can be done in the matter for the present. Mr. Strick says that he will keep us fully informed whenever he hears anything relating to Ormuz.

I think that everything that can be done has been done to get the Ormuz oxide into British hands for a term of years, but it is impossible to compel people to enter into contracts. It is pretty clear, I think, that the Germans cannot get a Concession for the Ormuz oxide without running risks of considerable financial losses. It is to be hoped that Mr. Strick is right in his idea that he may still get the opportunity of taking the business, and on better terms than now offered.

(Signed) A. WILSON FOX.

November 4, 1908.

[38730]

No. 157.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 7.)

Sir,

India Office, November 4, 1908.

IN reply to your letter, dated the 26th ultimo, as to the Governorship of Kain, I am directed to say that Viscount Morley concurs in the proposal of Sir E. Grey to take no further action to oppose the appointment of Hashmat-ul-Mulk to that post.

A copy of a telegram sent to the Government of India is inclosed.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 157.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, November 4, 1908.

Please refer to your telegram of the 14th September.

It is inexpedient to offer further opposition to Hashmat-ul-Mulk's appointment as Governor of Kain. The doctrine is essentially sound which is laid down in Mr. Marling's letter to His Majesty's Consul in Seistan. It should be borne in mind for guidance of our Consuls (see despatch of the 2nd ultimo from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran).



[38758]

No. 158.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 7.)*

(No. 363.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 7, 1908.*

RED oxide on Hormuz Island.

I have been informed by Moin-ut-Tujar that he hears that the Persian Legation in London are attempting to sell his Concession for Hormuz red oxide to certain Englishmen. He presumes that Strick is one of them, but he does not know any of their names for certain. Moin seems to think that His Majesty's Government are cognizant of the affair, but I have told him that I feel sure that His Majesty's Government know nothing about it, and that I have heard nothing of any such scheme.

Ellinger might perhaps be asked if he knows anything of the alleged negotiations. Moin-ut-Tujar gave me to understand that Ellinger is now engaged in negotiations for the formation of a Company upon revised conditions; it might be an opportune moment for Ellinger to urge Moin-ut-Tujar to come to terms as regards the proposed Company.

[38782]

No. 159.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 7.)*

(No. 364.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 7, 1908.*

GUARDS for the Oil Syndicate. Your telegrams Nos. 302 and 313 of the 27th ultimo and the 4th instant respectively.

I have referred the question of the retention of the guard to Captain Lorimer, who is of opinion that it should be retained. However, he is quite agreed that there is another side to the question, and suggests that Wilson should be consulted. I have adopted this suggestion.

Captain Lorimer says at the same time that Mr. D'Arcy should be able to judge, with his experience of the Bakhtiari, whether the guard should be retained, provided that he is made aware that, firstly, it was not on account of any active good-will on the part of the Khans that quiet has been maintained at the oil works; secondly, that their guards have not improved, and have been the cause of trouble; and thirdly, how far the Government would be able or willing, in case of need, to reintroduce the guard.

[38811]

No. 160.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 7.)*

(No. 365.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 7, 1908.*

JULFA-TABREEZ road.

With reference to my telegram No. 359 of the 4th instant, I have received from the Minister for Foreign Affairs the reply of the Shah to our representations in regard to the holding up of the Julfa road. His Majesty states that Shuja Nizam's men and the Maku horsemen have not been acting by His Majesty's command. Though he has no intention of interfering with ordinary trade, His Majesty intends to take steps in order to prevent revolutionaries and munitions of war from entering Tabreez.

I was yesterday told by M. de Hartwig that, except for occasional acts of pillage committed by people from the neighbouring villages, the Julfa road was open.

[38815]

No. 161.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 8.)*

(No. 247.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 8, 1908.*

PERSIA. Telegram No. 366 from Tehran. Shah's abrogation of the Constitution.

I will see M. Isvolsky on this subject to-morrow and will sound him as to whether

Russia would feel disposed to recall her officers as a sign of the displeasure of the Russian Government, and as an evident and public proof that they disapprove of the action of the Shah.

Objections of various kinds will, I expect, be raised against this suggestion.

[38812]

No. 162.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 8.)*

(No. 366.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

*Tehran, November 8, 1908.*

A DEMONSTRATION protesting against the Constitution, and organized by the entourage of the Shah, took place at Bagh-i-Shah yesterday. A deputation, consisting of some hundreds of persons representing all classes of the population, went to the Shah's camp and was there received by the Grand Vizier and other members of the Ministry. After reading to them telegrams which had been received from the provinces, including one from Tabreez, begging for the abandonment of the Constitution, the Court officials then presented to the deputation, for their signature, a Petition in the same sense. All present, including the Ministers, signed this document, which was then carried to the Shah. His Majesty, after some show of reluctance, and a declaration to the effect that he had been on the point of issuing the Electoral Law, promised that he would instruct the Grand Vizier in the sense desired by those who had signed the Petition.

It is probable that most of the petitioners signed through fear of the consequences, for one of the Ministers tells me that he only signed on that account.

I am informed by the German Minister that he fears that people will take refuge *en masse* at the German Legation.

[38813]

No. 163.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 8.)*

(No. 367.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 8, 1908.*

THE Shah and the Constitution. Your telegram No. 309 of the 2nd instant.

This afternoon M. de Hartwig and I handed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs the identic Memorandum addressed to the Shah.

[38870]

No. 164.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 9.)*

(No. 483.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, October 30, 1908.*

I TOOK an opportunity yesterday of mentioning to M. Tcharykoff that, in consequence of what he had told me on Sunday last as to the Emperor having remarked on certain inaccurate information which the "Times" correspondent sent from Tehran, some inquiry had been made into the matter. I said that the information sent by the correspondent in Tehran was really in accordance with the actual facts. Captain Ouchakoff had left Tehran, though it was true he had only gone to Kasvin, and not for the purpose of commanding his detachment in an advance on Tabreez but in order to pay his troops. The correspondent therefore had correctly given the facts, though he might have given cause—unwittingly, perhaps—for a wrong interpretation being placed on the movements of Captain Ouchakoff. My Government, I added, regretted that any misunderstanding should have arisen, and I could tell him that now the "Times" was fully aware of the correct and loyal manner in which the Russian Government were observing the Convention. I added that the "Times" had throughout been a staunch supporter of the Anglo-Russian Convention, and I was sure that it would not willingly give publicity to any unfounded reports which might cast a doubt on the loyalty of the Russian Government.

M. Tcharykoff expressed much pleasure with the tenour of my remarks, and said that he would take steps that His Majesty the Emperor should be made acquainted with them. He was sure that His Majesty would be quite satisfied with the explanations.

[1622]

2 C



The Emperor, he might tell me, was most anxious that the Convention should be observed in the most loyal manner, and was naturally a little sensitive if any doubts arose on that point.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[38874]

No. 165.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 9.)*

(No. 487.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, October 31, 1908.*

M. ISVOLSKY mentioned to me yesterday that the reports which he had received from Tabreez were not at all satisfactory, that the town was in a most disturbed state, and that the Russian traders were suffering great losses owing to the stagnation of commerce. His Excellency said that he was most unwilling to take any decided measures for the purpose of affording security to Russian subjects, but that it would be most difficult to abstain from some measures if the present condition of affairs was allowed to continue indefinitely.

I told him that I was surprised to hear that the town was in a disturbed state, as I had received the day before a telegram reporting that all was quiet and that the bazaars had reopened. It was true that the Julfa road was interrupted, but I was not sure whether this was on account of the activity of the Shah's horsemen or for what reason. M. Isvolsky asked if I could let him see the telegram to which I referred; and on my return home I sent him a paraphrase of Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 355, and asked whether he would like me to suggest that further inquiries should be made. I have not yet received a reply.

Although doubtless Russian commerce is suffering losses by the prolonged unrest, I trust that the Russian Government will continue to be patient. I mentioned to M. Isvolsky that it would be well to hasten the presentation of the identic Memorandum to the Shah so that the removal of the disability affecting Tabreez might be expedited. His Excellency said he would send me a reply at once, and that there were one or two modifications which the Russian Government would like to see introduced.

I did receive an amended identic Memorandum this morning, but as in the meanwhile your telegram No. 559 of yesterday, suggesting an addendum to the Memorandum, has reached me, I have refrained from telegraphing the modifications suggested by the Russian Government until I have heard from M. Isvolsky whether he agrees with the addendum, which I communicated to him in a letter this morning.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[38878]

No. 166.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 9.)*

(No. 492.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 1, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of some documents which I have received from M. Isvolsky in regard to the identic Memorandum which it is proposed that the British and Russian Ministers should address to the Shah of Persia concerning the removal of the disability which has been imposed on Tabreez in respect of elections, and also for the purpose of expediting the fulfilment of the promises of His Majesty respecting the publication of the Electoral Law.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

*Inclosure 1 in No. 166.*

*Aide-mémoire.*

AINSI que M. Teharykow avait déjà eu l'occasion d'en parler à Sir Arthur Nicolson, le Gouvernement Impérial considère qu'il serait désirable d'introduire certaines modifications dans le texte du projet d'une communication identique à faire à Sa Majesté le

Schah par les Représentants de Russie et de la Grande-Bretagne à Téhéran au sujet des élections en Azerbaïdjan.

Ainsi, le Gouvernement Impérial pense qu'il vaut mieux s'abstenir de fixer la date des élections dans la dite province, d'autant plus que celle qui est indiquée dans le projet (1<sup>er</sup> Chavval (14 (27) Octobre)) est déjà écoulée, et d'abandonner le choix de cette date aux décisions ultérieures du Gouvernement Persan. La présence d'un grand nombre d'anarchistes Russes au camp de Sattar Khan oblige le Gouvernement Russe à une prudence particulière dans la rédaction de la communication projetée, afin d'éviter de lui donner le caractère d'une concession envers eux, puisque cette démarche ne doit en réalité qu'appuyer auprès du Schah une supplique de la population paisible et fidèle à Sa Majesté qui lui avait adressé par télégraphe la prière de lui permettre de participer aux élections. Le fait que celles-ci se produiraient plus tard que dans les autres provinces ne pourrait que contribuer à raffermir l'autorité de Sa Majesté aux yeux de la population de Tauris, d'autant plus que cette procédure trouverait un précédent dans les élections du premier Medjliss, qui n'ont pas été effectuées, non plus, le même jour dans toutes les provinces.

En conséquence, le Gouvernement Impérial propose que, dans la première phrase du projet, après les mots "de lui permettre de prendre part aux élections," les mots "fixés pour le 1<sup>er</sup> Chavval" soient omis; il trouve préférable ensuite que la seconde moitié de la deuxième phrase, après les mots "en vue de calmer définitivement cette province," soit rédigée comme suit: "de daigner accorder à la population de cette dernière la grâce sollicitée, et de donner en outre à cette occasion une amnistie générale à tous les sujets de votre Majesté qui ont été mêlés au récent mouvement révolutionnaire."

Le Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères serait fort reconnaissant à l'Ambassade Britannique de bien vouloir lui faire connaître l'avis du Cabinet de Londres au sujet des modifications proposées. Le texte complet du projet de communication, modifié dans le sens du présent aide-mémoire, se trouve sous ce pli.

*Saint-Petersbourg, le 17 Octobre, 1908.*

*Inclosure 2 in No. 166.*

*Draft Identic Note to be communicated to the Shah by the Representatives of Great Britain and Russia at Tehran respecting Azerbaijan Elections.*

D'APRÈS les renseignements parvenus à la Légation de Russie [d'Angleterre], il paraît qu'une accalmie relative s'est établie ces derniers jours dans l'Azerbaïdjan; la population de Tauris, fatiguée des troubles et désordres, et animée du désir sincère de mériter la clémence de votre Majesté, vient de vous envoyer ces jours-ci un télégramme par lequel elle s'adresse à votre Majesté, en la suppliant de lui octroyer aussi, de même qu'à toute la nation Persane, les bienfaits de la Constitution, et de lui permettre de prendre part aux élections. Le Ministre de Russie [d'Angleterre], conformément aux instructions de son Gouvernement, a l'honneur d'attirer l'attention de votre Majesté sur le fait qu'il serait en effet opportun dans ces circonstances, en vue de calmer définitivement cette province, de daigner accorder à la population de cette dernière la grâce sollicitée, et de donner en outre à cette occasion une amnistie générale à tous les sujets de votre Majesté qui ont été mêlés au récent mouvement révolutionnaire.

*Inclosure 3 in No. 166.*

*M. Isvolsky to Sir A. Nicolson.*

Mon cher Ambassadeur,

*Saint-Petersbourg, le 18 (31) Octobre, 1908.*

JE m'associe entièrement à l'idée suggérée par le Gouvernement Britannique, qui désire ajouter à la communication identique de nos deux Ministres à Téhéran quelques mots pour rappeler au Schah la nécessité de procéder au plus vite à la publication de la Loi Electorale.

La rédaction de la dernière phrase de cette communication pourrait, si vous n'y trouvez pas d'objections, être rédigée ainsi: "En même temps le Ministre de Russie [d'Angleterre] est autorisé par son Gouvernement à témoigner sa surprise au sujet du



retard survenu dans la promulgation de la Loi Électorale et à exprimer l'espoir que Sa Majesté le Schah donnera suite à ses promesses sans perte de temps."

Veuillez, mon cher Ambassadeur, me faire savoir aussitôt que possible si cette rédaction est approuvée par votre Gouvernement, pour me donner la possibilité d'envoyer à M. de Hartwig des instructions en ce sens.

Votre sincèrement dévoué,  
(Signé) ISVOLSKY.

[38880]

No. 167.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 9.)*

(No. 494.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 2, 1908.*

I VERBALLY communicated to M. Isvolsky yesterday evening the substance of your telegram No. 564 in regard to the condition of the Tabreez district and the impression which would be produced in Great Britain if Russian troops were to advance to that town.

M. Isvolsky, who is now thoroughly well aware of the feeling in England on the subject, remarked that he was most unwilling to take any measures of a strong character, but that he was receiving constant appeals as to the insecurity of the Russian subjects in Tabreez and the very serious losses which Russian trade was suffering. No one desired more than he did that tranquility should be restored, and he would naturally do nothing which could hamper that desirable eventuality; but if Russian lives were proved to be in really serious and imminent danger, the Russian Government would be forced to take measures to afford their subjects protection. Russia had really shown the greatest forbearance during the past few months.

He mentioned that he had heard from Count Benckendorff that you had declined to receive a deputation of Persian nationalists who were on a visit to London, on the ground that His Majesty's Government could not interfere with the internal affairs of Persia; and he seemed to be pleased with your decision.

I think that the Russian Government will not take any steps unless circumstances imperatively call for them; and M. Isvolsky promised to let me know before any such steps were adopted. I submit that now that the Russian Government are fully aware of the views prevalent among the public in England and have stated on more than one occasion that they will not move except in urgent circumstances, it would be prudent to make no further representations.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[38885]

No. 168.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 9.)*

(No. 499.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 3, 1908.*

I TOOK an opportunity yesterday of saying to the Emperor that I was extremely sorry that he had been vexed by a telegram which had appeared in the "Times" from its correspondent in Tehran, but that I was glad to say that the misunderstanding had been entirely cleared up. His Majesty said that I should think no more about the matter; he had been annoyed at the moment, as he disliked being considered disloyal, but the incident had now passed out of his mind. I told His Majesty that he had doubtless seen a telegraphic summary of an article in Monday's "Times," from which it would appear that that journal had fully recognized the loyal manner in which Russia was executing the Convention in respect to Persia. My Government, I could add, were sensible of the forbearance which Russia had displayed in dealing with the disturbed condition in Northern Persia, which I knew had caused considerable losses to Russian trade. Public opinion in England, and especially those sections of it which were strongly in favour of the Constitutional movement in Persia, had been at one time much stirred by the action of Colonel Liakhoff, and was always sensitive in regard to any action which might have the appearance of intervention in the internal affairs of Persia. You, I added, observed scrupulously the principles of non-intervention, and had declined to receive a deputation of Persian nationalists who were at present visiting London.

The Emperor said that Count Benckendorff had informed him of your having abstained from receiving the Persian deputation; and he decided also to take no steps which could be interpreted as intervening in Persian internal affairs. He certainly was determined to abide by the spirit and letter of the Convention. As to Colonel Liakhoff, he knew that officer very well, and had a high opinion of him. He was an excellent soldier, and would faithfully observe any orders which he received. He had now been furnished with very strict instructions as to his future conduct, and His Majesty did not anticipate that any further unpleasantness would occur. Colonel Liakhoff had been in a difficult position in his dual capacity of Commander of the Shah's bodyguard and of instructor to the Persian Cossack Brigade.

I did not consider that it would be prudent to pursue this topic further.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[38859]

No. 169.

*Count de Salis to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 9.)*

(No. 240. Commercial.)

Sir,

*Berlin, November 3, 1908.*

WITH reference to Sir Frank Lascelles' despatch No. 187, Commercial, of the 26th August last, I have the honour to call your attention to the following observations on the subject of Persian trade conditions, which form the substance of an article published in to-day's "Cologne Gazette" by Dr. Hugo Grothe, who has, I believe, recently returned from a tour through Asia Minor and Persia.

Dr. Grothe prefaces his remarks by complaining of the lack of good first-hand German information with regard to the conditions of trade in Persia. All the German works on Persia are out of date, and German inquirers are referred for up-to-date information entirely to the Diplomatic and Consular Reports of British Consular Officers in Persia. The German Legation at Tehran is too under-staffed to devote much attention to commercial affairs, and Tehran itself is not a commercial centre. Dr. Grothe strongly recommends the establishment of at least a Vice-Consulate in the capital in the interests of commerce, and of a German Consulate at Tabreez, which he regards as the business centre of the whole country.

Dr. Grothe then quotes a number of figures from the "Statistique Commerciale, Tableau Général du Commerce avec les Pays Étrangers" for 1906-7, in order to show that the internal troubles in connection with the constitutional movement did not affect the country as much as has been generally supposed. In 1906-7 Persian trade suffered no actual set-back, and although the imports into the country exceeded the exports the difference must be to some extent covered by the extensive smuggling, which is not taken into account in official statistics.

The increase during the past twenty-five years in Persian trade with Russia as compared with that with England is incontestably shown by the latest figures. Formerly England had the lion's share of Persian commerce, whereas in 1907 Russia is easily first with a total trade of exports and imports with Persia valued at 447,783,000 krans (1 kran = 5d. to 6d.), England following with 168,930,000 krans as a bad second.

Germany at present holds the sixth place in Persian trade, but she is making slow and steady progress. In 1901-2 her commerce with Persia was valued at 3,863,880 krans; in 1903-4, at 6,123,490 krans; and in 1906-7, at 9,849,259 krans. It is more especially noticeable that, in consequence of the new Persian Gulf service run by the Hamburg-America Line, Persian exports to Germany have greatly increased in quantity (1,514,312 krans in 1906-7 as compared with 170,544 krans in 1901-2). If account be taken of the German goods which enter Persia through India and are reckoned as being of English origin, and those which travel via Bagdad and are reckoned as of Turkish origin, Dr. Grothe estimates Germany's total trade with Persia at about the value of 8,000,000 marks to 10,000,000 marks.

Germany should, in the writer's opinion, lose no opportunity of ousting Russia in the north and west of Persia, particularly in the province of Azerbaijan, where the Persians are boycotting Russian goods, in revenge for Russia's encouragement of the reactionary party. A German commercial firm, Arslan and Co., have established themselves in Tabreez. The Levant Line calls twice a month at Trebizond, which is the starting-point of the trade route via Erzeroum to Tabreez; it would not therefore



be difficult to establish fixed conditions of freightage from Hamburg to Tabreez, which would enable the prices of goods in Tabreez to be calculated with greater certainty. The writer of the article advocates the establishment of a "German-Persian Commercial Society" which should undertake the improvement of means of communication, of facilities for transmission of goods, &c., and which, supported by the existing German banks in the country, might develop a very useful and profitable activity. The German Representative at Tehran, according to Dr. Grothe, has for years past been preparing the way for German commercial enterprise in Persia, but so far no German merchants have taken advantage of the opportunities offered.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) J. DE SALIS.

[39089] No. 170.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 9.)*

(No. 249.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburg, November 9, 1908.*  
PERSIA. My telegram No. 247 of the 8th November.

M. Isvolsky, whom I saw this morning, informed me that no news at all as to recent events in Tehran had reached him from there. He has telegraphed, however, to the Russian Minister for a report. As the Legations presented the identic Memorandum yesterday, and as it would appear that the Shah has not actually abrogated the Constitution but has only instructed his Grand Vizier to meet the wishes of the petitioners in regard to its abandonment, there may be hope that he will still refrain from definite abrogation.

I told M. Isvolsky that it seemed to me that, if the Shah really violated his promises, some serious notice of his action would have to be taken by the two Governments. He asked what form such action could take, and I suggested that perhaps the Russian officers might be withdrawn for a time by their Government. The Russian Government would thus prove clearly to the Shah that no help was to be expected from Russia. M. Isvolsky pointed out that there were two grave objections to such a step: firstly, either German or Austrian officers would be immediately called in to replace the Russians; or, secondly, the Cossack brigade, deprived of its European officers, would be rendered quite useless for the maintenance of order. I did not pursue the matter further, for, now that it has been broached, it will be easy to recur to it, and, moreover, there is still hope that the Shah may yet reconsider his promise to the petitioners. M. Isvolsky quite agreed with the view that the Petitions were not spontaneous, but had been manufactured to the order of the Court.

[39089] No. 171.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 589.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, November 9, 1908.*

WE should naturally have to make it clear to the Shah that no officers of any other nationality would be allowed to take the places of the Russian officers in the event of the latter being withdrawn. The abrogation of the Constitution by the Shah will put him in the wrong so entirely that an excellent opportunity will be afforded to the Russians of allaying the fears of the Nationalists, who otherwise may possibly attempt to thwart Russia and England by enlisting the sympathy of another Power.

It would be a good thing if we could discover some means of making manifest Russia's disapproval of the action taken by the Shah, but we should not go counter to the wishes of the Russian Government in urging too strongly the recall of their officers.

[38812] No. 172.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 316.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, November 9, 1908.*  
PERSIAN Constitution.

With reference to your telegram No. 366 of the 8th instant, a *bast en masse* would clearly betray a political motive, and you should therefore use every effort to prevent the British Legation being used for purposes of *bast*.

[39167] No. 173.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 10.)*

(No. 369.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, November 10, 1908.*  
"BAST" in His Majesty's Legation. Your telegram No. 316 of yesterday's date. The fears of the German Minister in regard to a "*bast en masse*" at his Legation which I reported in my telegram No. 366 have not been realized so far. There is no indication that people will attempt to take refuge at this Legation.

[39245] No. 174.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 10.)*

(No. 370.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, November 10, 1908.*  
THE Shah and the Constitution. My telegram No. 367 of the 8th instant. The following is confidential:—

M. de Hartwig and I have asked the Shah for private audiences in order to emphasize our identic representations of the 8th instant, and to advise His Majesty to fulfil his engagements and establish a constitutional régime notwithstanding the demonstration of the 7th instant.

His Majesty will receive us separately on the 12th instant.

[38758] No. 175.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir, *Foreign Office, November 10, 1908.*  
I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant respecting Red Oxide Concessions in the Persian Gulf. I am to transmit to you a further telegram, dated the 7th instant, which has been received from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran,\* and the draft of a telegram which, subject to the concurrence of the Secretary of State for India, Sir E. Grey proposes to send to Sir G. Barclay on the subject.†

I am, &c.  
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

[39295] No. 176.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 11.)*

Sir, *India Office, November 10, 1908.*  
IN reply to your letter, dated the 1st ultimo, as to the Pasand Khan incident, I am directed by Viscount Morley to inclose copy of telegraphic correspondence with



the Government of India on the subject, and to express his agreement in the proposal of Secretary Sir E. Grey to concur in the view that the matter may be allowed to drop.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 176.

*Viscount Morley to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, October 14, 1908.*

DESPATCH of 5th ultimo from Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran Seistan.

Approval is proposed of suggestion that the question regarding Pasand Khan may be allowed to drop in view of Persian note of the 30th August, on receipt of which Mr. Marling intimates in his despatch that he telegraphed to you on the subject. Do you agree in proposal to approve suggestion?

Inclosure 2 in No. 176.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P. *October 31, 1908.*

WE agree to proposals regarding Pasand Khan, contained in your telegram dated the 14th instant.

[39245] No. 177.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 317.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, November 11, 1908.*

SHAH and Constitution.

With reference to your telegram No. 370 of the 10th instant.

Action taken by you meets with approval of His Majesty's Government. It is advisable, in the interests of the Shah himself, and for the sake of tranquillity in his country, that His Majesty should carry out the promises which he gave to the Persian people. By these means security and peace will be restored in the Province of Azerbaijan and at Tabreez. You should impress these facts upon His Majesty.

[39454] No. 178.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 12.)*

Sir, *India Office, November 11, 1908.*

IN reply to your letter dated the 26th August last, and with reference to your letter of the 12th ultimo, inclosing copy of a letter from the Board of Trade, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to forward herewith, to be laid before the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 9th October, 1908, conveying the views of the Government of India on the suggestions made by His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire in his letter of the 6th June, 1908, regarding the general political situation in the Persian Gulf.

Viscount Morley concurs generally in the views expressed by the Government of India. As regards the various points raised in the correspondence, he desires to make the following observations:—

1. *Visit of Major Cox to Tehran.*—Lord Morley considers that a meeting between Sir G. Barclay and Major Cox would be advantageous, and, subject to Sir E. Grey's approval, he is prepared to instruct the Government of India to authorize Major Cox, as soon as a suitable opportunity occurs for leaving the Gulf, to proceed to Tehran.

2. *British and Russian Consular Establishments.*—The views of the Government of India on this subject are in substantial agreement with those expressed by His Majesty's

Ambassador at St Petersburg in his despatch of the 7th September last, No. 400. Pending the consideration, in connection with the despatch promised by the Government of India, of the question of our own establishments, the most that can be done is presumably to propose to the Russian Government a change of individuals, as suggested by Sir A. Nicolson, should a favourable occasion present itself.

3. *The immediate Appointment of a British Vice-Consul at Lingah.*—On a full consideration of the reasons given by Mr. Marling in his despatch of the 14th July last, No. 167, the Secretary of State in Council would be prepared, if Sir E. Grey agrees that a case for immediate action has been made out, to accept a moiety of the cost of the appointment of a Vice-Consulate at Lingah as a charge upon Indian revenues, the other half being defrayed by the Imperial Exchequer. If a suitable officer of the Levant Consular Service were available for the post, the cost would be less than if an officer of the Indian Political Department were appointed. It is observed that the Board of Trade are in favour of the creation of the appointment.

4. *Policing the Trade Routes.*—The proposals formulated by the Government of India in their despatch No. 33, dated the 15th March, 1906, were communicated to the Foreign Office with my letter of the 1st May, 1906. But the consideration of the subject was postponed owing to the decision of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury that an examination of the whole question of the scale of British expenditure in Persia was necessary before sanction could be given to the payment from British revenues of half the cost of any measures other than those that had actually been carried into effect. Sir E. Gorst's letter of the 15th February, 1907, in which the Secretary of State in Council was informed of this decision, stated that, in Sir E. Grey's opinion, while certain of the proposals that have been made might form the subject of further consideration, "the question of policing the southern trade routes and of affording proper protection to British trade interests in that part of Persia is one of immediate importance." Lord Morley concurs entirely in the view of the Government of India that, in the present condition of Persia, it is undesirable to take any action in the matter.

5. *Customs Administration.*—On this point also Lord Morley agrees with the Government of India that no action should be taken pending developments of the financial position in Persia, when the matter will have to be considered in connection with the international question referred to by the Board of Trade.

6. *Inadequacy of the present Naval Arrangements in the Gulf.*—Lord Morley is fully aware of the strain imposed upon His Majesty's ships by the necessity for dealing with the arms traffic on the Mekran Coast. He agrees with the Government of India that the question may be postponed until the results of the Brussels Conference, and of the negotiations respecting the importation of arms into Muscat have ascertained.

7. *Extension of Cable Communication and Introduction of Wireless Telegraphy.*—This subject will be dealt with in a separate communication.

8. *Trucial Coast.*—Lord Morley will await the recommendations of the Government of India on the further report expected from Major Cox.

In conclusion, I am to say that Lord Morley concurs entirely in the view indicated in the last sentence of the Viceroy's telegram, that His Majesty's Government, in dealing with questions of Persian policy, should bear in mind the effect likely to be produced by any action they may take, not only in Afghanistan, but in all countries subject to a Mahommadan Government.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 178.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P. *October 9, 1908.*

SITUATION in the Persian Gulf.

Please refer to your telegram of the 9th ultimo, asking for our views on the proposals in the letter of 6th June from Major Cox.

We concur in the view expressed in letter of 14th July from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran that a visit to Tehran on the part of Major Cox might be advantageous.

With regard to the question of the Consular representation of the Russian Government, a despatch on our own Consular establishments in Persia is being sent to you, in



which we have not found ourselves able to suggest that any reduction should be made. Suggestion that Bunder Abbas Consulate should be relinquished by Russia does not, therefore, seem to us desirable. It would, no doubt, be desirable that M. Ovseenko should be transferred, but it would, perhaps, be unwise to press this just now, in view of statement by Mr. Marling as to the high esteem in which the Russian Consul at Bunder Abbas is held by M. Hartwig. We support proposal of Mr. Marling and Major Cox for Vice-Consulate at Lingah, in view of efforts of Germany, half the cost being borne by Indian revenues. In the first instance, the appointment might be limited to three years.

With regard to the question of policing the trade routes, a proposal for utilizing sowars was made in our despatch of the 15th March, 1906. Views of His Majesty's Government on this proposal have not yet reached us. We doubt if it is practicable, under the changed conditions, to take action without interfering with Persian independence and integrity.

As to the question of a radical change in the Customs, His Majesty's Government are better judges than we of what the attitude of the European Powers concerned would be. If an opening for interference and suggestion of international control could be given to Germany by the raising of this question, it would probably be preferable that things should be left alone pending the treatment, in connection with a loan or bankruptcy, of the whole financial position of Persia.

If present conditions continue, we agree with Major Cox that three subsidized ships in the Gulf will be insufficient. But until the results of the Arms Conference are made known this question might stand over.

Our views on the question of extension of cable communication were stated in our telegram of 21st September.

Further representations from Major Cox are still awaited with regard to arrangements on Trucial Coast.

We desire to make it clear, in recording our opinions, that they are formed with reference to the present state of finances and politics of Persia, and, in view of the fact that the bringing about of substantial reforms appear to be hopeless. As developments in Persia are being closely watched by the Afghans, it is also important that, for the present, no action should be taken by which the *status quo* would materially altered in Persia.

[39418] No. 179.

*Treasury to Foreign Office.—(Received November 12.)*

Sir, *Treasury Chambers, November 11, 1908.*  
THE Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury have had before them Mr. Mallet's letter of the 31st ultimo, further respecting the proposed appointment of a Military Attaché to His Majesty's Consulate-General at Meshed.

In reply, I am to say that, in view of the further explanations now given, my Lords accept the suggestion of Secretary Sir E. Grey that the appointment should be made at the joint expense of the Indian and the Imperial Exchequers for a period of two years, on the understanding that the question of its continuance will be considered at the end of that period. I am accordingly to convey to you their authority for the charge to Imperial funds of one-half of the cost involved, varying, according to the rank of the officer employed, from 574*l.* 8*s.* to 927*l.* 4*s.* per annum.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) G. H. MURRAY.

[39494] No. 180.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 12.)*

(No. 251. Confidential.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburg, November 12, 1908.*

PERSIA. I was informed confidentially to-day by M. Isvolsky that telegraphic instructions had been sent to M. de Hartwig to return to St. Petersburg in order that he might report on the Persian situation.

M. Isvolsky read to me extracts from a telegram from Tehran, depicting the situation in sombre colours. This telegram was not from the Legation, but was addressed, I imagine, to the Minister of Finance. It said that even if the Assembly were to meet, there would be no work for it to do, and that its activity would probably be confined to agitation.

I said that, in order to calm the populace and avoid troubles, it was necessary that the Assembly should be called together.

[39479] No. 181.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 12.)*

(No. 371.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, November 12, 1908.*

TABREEZ situation.

His Majesty's Consul-General reports that there is public rejoicing at Tabreez on account of the death of the Chief of Maku who has been murdered.

It is said that reinforcements of 400 cavalry have joined the Governor-General who is fifteen miles from Tabreez at Bashmineh.

Mr. Wratishaw adds that the town is resuming its usual aspect.

[39496] No. 182.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 12.)*

(No. 372.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, November 12, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution.

M. de Hartwig was received yesterday, and I to-day, in private audience by the Shah. Our representations were identic in the sense of your telegram No. 317 of the 11th instant. We urged the Shah not to violate the pledges he had given to his people and to the two friendly Powers on account of the anti-Constitutional demonstration of last Saturday which had been organized.

In reply, the Shah said that a very large section of the population regarded a constitutional régime as contrary to their religion and were consequently opposed to it. The artificial character of the demonstration of Saturday he denied, but assured me that on that occasion he had taken no decision. His Majesty asserted that personally he was in favour of an Assembly, but that it should not be one like the last, and that he was now endeavouring to devise a scheme for one which would be suitable. I pointed out that he was generally credited with having no intention of fulfilling his promises, and that if he were really in favour of a Constitution he was much maligned by public opinion. I ventured to disagree with His Majesty as to the feeling of the major part of his people, and I strongly emphasized the desirability in his own interest and in that of restoring peace in Azerbaijan, of promptly disabusing by an early fulfilment of his pledges the public mind of the misapprehension as to his intentions which prevailed.

[39677] No. 183.

*Consul McDouall to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 14.)*

(No. 1. Treaty.)  
Sir, *Mohammerah, October 24, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to report that M. Gratama, of the firm of ter Meulen, Gratama, and Co., of Ahwaz, has informed me that he has been appointed Consul of the Netherlands for Arabistan, Luristan, and Kurdistan, his commission being dated the 13th May last and his exequatur in July, and that he entered on his functions from the 20th October.

The fact that the firm is a Dutch one appears to be the only reason for the appointment, and as far as I have been able to ascertain there is no salary attached to the post.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) WM. McDOUALL.



[39778]

No. 184.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 14.)*

Sir,

*India Office, November 14, 1908.*

IN reply to your letter of the 10th instant as to the Hormuz Oxide Concession and the application made to the Persian Government for a similar Concession on the Island of Sirri, I am directed to say that Viscount Morley concurs in the terms of the telegram which Sir E. Grey proposes to send to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran in reply to the latter's telegrams Nos. 345 and 363 of the 22nd ultimo and 7th instant.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

[39766]

No. 185.

*Imperial Bank of Persia to Foreign Office.—(Received November 14.)*

Dear Mr. Mallet,

*25, Abchurch Lane, London, November 13, 1908.*

I INCLOSE a copy of a telegram received from Tehran yesterday. I am sure Sir George Barclay is doing all he can in the matter, and hope his efforts will result in tightening our hold on the southern customs.

Yours very truly,  
(Signed) T. JACKSON.

Inclosure in No. 185.

*Telegram received from Tehran by the Imperial Bank of Persia.**November 12, 1908.*

BUSHIRE telegraphs: "Customs have not paid anything to-day. Believe received instructions discontinued." The telegram ends here.

We have requested British Legation take immediate action.

[39779]

No. 186.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 14.)*

(No. 253.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 14, 1908.*

PERSIA. Last night I had a conversation with M. Isvolsky on the Persian situation. His Excellency said that he was decided on two points, namely, that Russia would not intervene nor support the Shah. The course of action from which he would abstain was clear enough, but he was perplexed as to what course of action he could follow in order to remedy a situation which might once more drift into anarchy, and render intervention by the two Governments inevitable. It had occurred to him that he might elaborate a project of reforms, and insist upon its execution in accord with His Majesty's Government. But neither men nor parties capable of carrying through any reforms existed in Persia, as far as he knew. The Shah's policy with regard to the Constitution was one of "shuffle."

He said that he had been thinking over my remarks with regard to the recall of the Russian officers of the Cossack Brigade, but had come to the conclusion that in the present circumstances such a step would be hazardous. Nevertheless he was seriously considering what means could be found of recalling Colonel Liakhoff, who was too independent of the Legation. An officer who would obey the orders of the Government and the Legation was available, and was being held in readiness to take his place.

M. de Hartwig had already started for St. Petersburg. M. Isvolsky's intention was that a Departmental Committee should be appointed to study the Persian question, with a view to proposing some sort of remedy for the present situation. Could I suggest any solution?

I replied in the negative, and observed that my acquaintance with Persia dated

from twenty years ago, when conditions were quite different from those which prevailed to-day. It seemed to me, however, that the last steps taken by the two Governments had only led to inconclusive results, which were not satisfactory.

I promised M. Isvolsky that I would telegraph to you a brief summary of our conversation, and suggested that perhaps you, after consulting those on the spot in Persia, might be in a position to bring forward some proposal as to what further steps could be taken with a view to improving the present state of affairs.

[39754]

No. 187.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 14.)*

(No. 373.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 14, 1908.*

UNDER instructions from his Government, M. de Hartwig telegraphed to his Consul-General at Tabreez last week to inquire whether there were not two German officers in the town who were giving assistance to the Nationalists in the fortifications they are building.

The Russian Consul-General replied in the affirmative, adding that his information was from a sure source.

I telegraphed to Mr. Wratislaw for a confirmation of this story, and he informs me that the two Germans are men residing in Tabreez for business purposes, and that so far as he can ascertain, they have no technical knowledge.

[39755]

No. 188.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 14.)*

(No. 374.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 14, 1908.*

EXCHANGE of telegraph lines.

I was approached to-day by M. de Hartwig who, under instructions from his Government, suggested that the negotiations for the exchange of lines might now be reopened by the telegraph Directors. He considered this moment the more opportune, in view of Mr. Barker's return.

In reply, I explained confidentially to M. de Hartwig that the Indo-European Telegraph Department was at present negotiating with the Minister of Telegraphs, in order to obtain his consent to their undertaking the repair of the Ahwaz-Borasjun line, and that I thought that if the Department were to treat the two questions simultaneously, the success of the Ahwaz-Borasjun negotiations might be prejudiced.

I should add that this is Mr. Barker's opinion.

M. de Hartwig said he would telegraph to his Government in this sense.

[39714]

No. 189.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 14.)*

(No. 375.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 14, 1908.*

M. DE HARTWIG tells me that he is leaving Tehran for St. Petersburg "on official business" to-morrow.

M. Sabline, the First Secretary, arrived on Thursday, and will take charge after M. de Hartwig's departure.

[39715]

No. 190.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 14.)*

(No. 376.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 14, 1908.*

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

Referring to my despatch No. 280 of the 18th ultimo, I have received the reply of the Persian Government to our identic note. It states that according to Persian reports,

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no place has been evacuated, although Turkish troops have been reduced at certain points, and that in certain places outside the zone, notably in the district of Barandug, further encroachments have been made.

[39716]

No. 191.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 14.)*

(No. 377.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 14, 1908.

I HAVE received a report from His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, to the effect that the village of Mushambar, 14 miles east of Tabreez, has been pillaged, and the district is being ravaged by Karadaghi tribesmen.

[39792]

No. 192.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 15.)*

(No. 378.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 15, 1908.

SITUATION at Tabreez.

His Majesty's Consul-General telegraphs to-day that he has received a report from Julfa to the effect that the first of nineteen military trains which were expected arrived yesterday at that place. The soldiers are for Tabreez, it is supposed.

[39793]

No. 193.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 15.)*

(No. 379.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 15, 1908.

SITUATION at Tabreez.

In continuation of my telegram No. 377 of yesterday's date, I have received further particulars to-day from His Majesty's Consul-General of the attack on the village of Mushamba. The assailants were, it appears, reinforcements for the Governor-General, and were provided with artillery. Samsam Khan, their leader, had been ordered by Ain-ed-Dowleh, at the request of the Armenian Bishop of Tabreez, not to attack, but he had disobeyed these orders. According to Mr. Wratislaw, it is feared that further attacks on Armenian villages will be made.

The Russian Chargé d'Affaires and I will press that Samsam Khan be ordered to desist from ravaging the neighbourhood.

Mr. Wratislaw states that it is reported that the Governor-General has been joined by 800 Persian Cossacks with six guns, but that this news has not made any impression in Tabreez.

[39834]

No. 194.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 15.)*

(No. 380.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 15, 1908.

THE Shah and Constitution.

Telegram No. 251 from St. Petersburg, repeated to me in your telegram No. 318 of the 14th instant.

I concur in the poor opinion which the correspondent of the Russian Ministry of Finance referred to in the second paragraph of Sir A. Nicolson's telegram has expressed of the prospects of usefulness to be derived from "the Assembly," if he means that the new one is to be similar to the last.

I was careful at my audience with the Shah on Thursday last to make it clear to His Majesty that it was not my wish to prescribe as suitable for Persia any particular form of Assembly.

It would be easy for the Shah, if he were in earnest, to find among his subjects

men who would be competent and ready to draw up an electoral law which would produce an Assembly of moderate men. Such an Assembly would, while avoiding the excesses of the late Medjliss, have a fair chance of success in coping with present abuses, and would exercise some check on the camerilla now in power.

39968]

No. 195.

*Consul Stevens to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 16.)*

(No. 11.)

Sir,

Batoum, November 6, 1908.

HAVING recently seen repeated reports in various British and Continental newspapers relative to the dispatch of troops, by the Russian Government, into Northern Persia, I have taken particular pain to ascertain whether the rumour was correct, and I am able to-day to inform you, on telegraphic information received from Russian Julfa, that the permanent force of Cossacks at that place has not of late been re-inforced, and that no Russian troops have crossed the frontier into Azerbaijan, or are on their way to Tabreez.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) P. STEVENS.

[39962]

No. 196.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 16.)*

(No. 381.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 16, 1908.

THE Shah and Constitution.

There has been a certain amount of effervescence amongst the Constitutionals in Tehran since the ante-Constitution demonstration was organized at Bagh-i-Shah on the 7th instant, and the Nationalists have held several meetings.

A Petition, signed by the ex-President of the Assembly, Sani-ed-Dowleh, and other prominent Deputies, by members of the clergy and some merchants, was presented to all the Legations yesterday. The Petition protested against the artificial anti-Constitution demonstration at Bagh-i-Shah, and declared that the nation counts on the assistance of the Legations to obtain a Constitution, which it still anxiously awaits.

[39778]

No. 197.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 319.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, November 16, 1908.

HORMUZ oxide.

See your telegram No. 363.

The only communications addressed by Messrs. Strick to the Persian Government within the knowledge of His Majesty's Government refer to Sirri, and no communications have passed on the subject of Hormuz. This should be made clear to the Moin, and you should assure him that His Majesty's Government will remain friendly to him so long as British interests of a commercial nature are not thwarted by him.

Sirri oxide.

The modification you suggest in your telegram No. 345 meets with my approval, but you will presumably not leave out any of the points to which I drew your attention in my telegram No. 266 of the 19th September (paragraph 1). It looks as though a Concession on the island is sought by Messrs. Strick, but, in my opinion, His Majesty's Government could not give them, in the event of their applying for a Concession, any preference over Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co., and thus could not give their application any material support. But, on the other hand, should the Persian Government on their own account close with Messrs. Strick's offer, His Majesty's Government, not being bound by any promise to support the application of Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co., would not feel themselves justified in opposing the action of the Persian Government.



Seeing that it is now clear that Messrs. Ellinger cannot form a Company, it would probably be desirable that the Moin should arrange terms with Messrs. Strick, so that there may be no danger of the Germans obtaining the Concession, but no action on your part is required at present. The position of Messrs. Strick with regard to Hormuz is, in their own opinion, a secure one.

The last paragraph is confidential.

[39295]

No. 198.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 202.)  
Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 16, 1908.*

I DULY received Mr. Marling's despatch No. 244 of the 5th September last on the subject of the claim for satisfaction for the assault committed in June 1907 near Lat-i-Baring on certain members of the escort of His Majesty's Consul at Seistan by some retainers of Pasand Khan, who at that time held a contract with the Persian Customs for the safe conveyance of the mails.

After consultation with His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, I concur in Mr. Marling's suggestion that the note from the Persian Government of the 30th August shall be accepted and the matter allowed to drop.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) E. GREY.

[40125]

No. 199.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 17.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a despatch to the Government of India, dated the 13th instant, with inclosures, relative to the Bunder Abbas Consulate guard.

*India Office, November 16, 1908.*

Inclosure in No. 199.

*Viscount Morley to Government of India.*

My Lord, *India Office, November 13, 1908.*

I INCLOSE, for the information of your Excellency's Government, copy of correspondence regarding the proposal made in your Secret letter in the Foreign Department,\* dated the 4th June, for the maintenance at His Majesty's Consulate at Bunder Abbas of a detachment of sixteen infantry, in addition to the existing guard of four sowars.

2. It will be seen that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury have accepted a moiety of the expenditure involved in this proposal as a charge against Imperial revenues, for a period of three years, with the condition that a further report be supplied to them before three years have elapsed, should the additional guards be still considered necessary.

3. The proposal in your letter is therefore sanctioned as a temporary measure, with the condition named above.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) MORLEY.

\* See Part XV, Nos. 191, 306, 325, 368, 500, 523; and *ante*, No. 46.

[40206]

No. 200.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 17.)*

(No. 383.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 17, 1908.*

SHAH and Constitution: Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 253.

I question the ability of Europeans to prescribe in detail for the ills of Persia, and if we insisted on reforms of our own devising an undesirable responsibility for their execution would be entailed. I therefore deprecate the elaboration in Russia of a scheme of reforms to be pressed upon the Shah.

The Shah is clearly shuffling, and, even if, as M. de Hartwig seemed to expect, His Majesty publishes a Rescript as a result of our last audience, it will unquestionably be inadequate. By continued pressure, in close co-operation with M. Sabline, I hope to be able to bring His Majesty to a more reasonable frame of mind, and our best course would be, I think, not to suggest any particular form of Constitution, but to urge that the framing of electoral laws be intrusted to competent persons. It would be easy to name several who would be suited to the task.

I consider that, however desirable it may be that Colonel Liakhoff be replaced by an officer not so independent of his Legation, it is undesirable that the other officers should be withdrawn. Their departure following immediately on that of M. de Hartwig would, I think, apart from the reason given by M. Isvolsky, be open to a misconception which might prejudice Anglo-Russian co-operation in Tehran.

[40249]

No. 201.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 18.)*

(Private.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 18, 1908.*

WITH regard to the situation, as mentioned in my telegram No. 383 of the 17th instant, I consider that the all-important point is to disillusion Shah, if he thinks that question of a constitutional Government is not regarded so seriously by Russia as by us. This result should be secured by the cordial co-operation of Russian Representative and myself, a course which I regard as most probable.

It might be well, if the occasion requires it, to threaten to withdraw Russian officers (in order to bring Shah to reason), but their actual removal would give rise to comment whereby old sores now healed might be reopened.

[40250]

No. 202.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 18.)*

(No. 384.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 18, 1908.*

APPOINTMENT of Persian Minister in London.

I have been approached by the Persian Government, who inquire whether the appointment of Mushir-ul-Mulk, the present Chargé d'Affaires, as Minister-Resident in London would be acceptable to the King.

I replied that it must be clearly understood that such a proposal must be regarded as a temporary expedient only, and that I would submit it to His Majesty's Government as such.

[40346]

No. 203.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 18.)*

(No. 385.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 18, 1908.*

FOLLOWING is very confidential:—

I have received telegram from His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, stating that he has reason to believe that the Russian Consul-General's one idea is to bring

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2 G



about Russian occupation, and that with this object in view he furnishes alarmist and exaggerated reports of the situation at Tabreez, which should be largely discounted.

Mr. Wratislaw hears from Julfa that there are 1,200 Russian troops, with thirty-five officers, now at that place.

[39779]

No. 204.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 322.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 18, 1908.*

SITUATION in Persia.

See Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 253 of the 14th instant.

In my opinion there remains only one way of forcing the Shah to grant a constitution, namely, by threatening him with some sort of effective action. It seems to me that the best way of bringing pressure to bear on him would be to deprive him of his supplies by seizing at the same moment the northern and southern frontier customs. We should then, however, be interfering directly in Persian domestic affairs. I should be glad to know if you consider this suggestion practicable.

[37640]

No. 205.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 203.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 18, 1908.*

WITH reference to Mr. Marling's despatch No. 111 of the 7th May, respecting the loss of £ T. 300 while in transit between Tabreez and Urumia, I request that you will inform me whether the Persian Government will apparently be in a position to meet their liability in the matter.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) E. GREY.

[37640]

No. 206.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 26. Commercial.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 18, 1908.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 20, Commercial, of the 21st May last, forwarding a letter from Mr. H. J. Stevens on the subject of the guts monopoly in Persia, I transmit to you herewith an extract from a letter from Mr. Charles Stevens, requesting the intervention of His Majesty's Legation with a view to obtaining permits to export, which he states have been granted to Russian, Austrian, and other British firms.\* His letter also contains a reference to the claim of his firm for the refund of certain taxes imposed on the export of silkworm eggs, which formed the subject of Mr. Marling's despatch No. 18 of the 12th May.

A copy of the reply which has been addressed to Mr. C. Stevens is inclosed.†

I request that you will report on the question of the prohibition of the export of guts bearing the Hadji Kazim mark, and that you will take such steps as you properly can to secure for Messrs. Stevens the same facilities for export which are obtained by other firms.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) E. GREY.

\* No. 121.

† No. 207.

[37640]

No. 207.

*Foreign Office to Mr. C. Stevens.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 18, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 28th ultimo, containing inquiries respecting certain questions which concern your business relations in Persia.

With regard to the claim against the Persian Government for the loss of £ T. 300, stolen in transit between Tabreez and Urumia, I am to state that although the Persian Government have never contested the claim they have hitherto asserted their inability to meet it owing to lack of funds. His Majesty's Legation have not failed to watch the case, and Sir G. Barclay, His Majesty's Minister, is being requested to report how the matter now stands.

In reply to your inquiry respecting claims arising out of the recent disturbances in Tabreez, I am to inform you that whatever the Persian Government should admit in the case of Russian claims for losses would of course be claimed by His Majesty's Government on behalf of British subjects, who would in such circumstances be entitled both to "most-favoured-nation," as well as to national, treatment.

As regards the Concession for navigation on Lake Urumia, you inquire whether if you were to manage the business for the present concessionaire, without having either interest in it or shares in the profits, but receiving a commission, the proposal would be favourably viewed by His Majesty's Government.

I am to inform you, in reply, that Sir E. Grey regrets that he is unable to approve such a course, which he considers would be inconsistent with the spirit of the Anglo-Russian Convention.

With reference to the withdrawal by the Persian Government of the sheep's casings monopoly held by Hadji Kazim, Sir E. Grey has nothing to add to the communication made by His Majesty's Legation at Tehran to the representative of your firm in Persia, viz., that His Majesty's Government could not support a claim for damages from the Persian Government for any indirect injury which may have been caused as the result of the failure of the Persian Government to enforce a monopoly granted to one of their own subjects. With regard to the prohibition to export guts bearing the Hadji Kazim mark, Sir E. Grey understands that this prohibition only extends to the goods exported in transit through Russian territory, and not to direct exports to Turkey. On this point His Majesty's Minister at Tehran is being instructed to report and to take such action as he properly can to secure for you the same facilities for export which are obtained by other firms.

With regard to the taxes paid by your firm on silkworm eggs exported from Persia in 1906-7, His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran was authorized in July last to present a claim for the repayment of all such duties wrongfully imposed. The result of his application will, in due course, be communicated to your firm.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[40420]

No. 208.

*Mr. Marling to Foreign Office.—(Received November 19.)*

My dear Parker,

*Sedbury Park, Chepstow, November 18, 1908.*

INCLOSED is a Memorandum on Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 253. I have taken it for granted that neither His Majesty's Government nor the Russian Government wish to take on themselves the task of governing Persia against the wishes of the great majority of its inhabitants, and have therefore suggested such measures as I think would put an end to the present unrest and, to some extent, remove the causes of it. The great obstacle is the Shah, and the great difficulty will be to make him understand that the Powers are in earnest, and that intrigue on his part to defeat their efforts towards good government in Persia will be fraught with very disagreeable consequences to him.

If the two Powers leave the country to itself and the Shah to himself, the Shah will certainly be driven from the throne. It would not be a bad solution, provided the



Russians will agree to allow Zil-es-Sultan to succeed. The Zil is a ruffian of the first water, but he would keep order, and that is the most we can hope for.

Yours sincerely,  
(Signed) C. M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 208.

*Memorandum on Sir A. Nicolson's Telegram No. 253.*

I VENTURE to deprecate warmly the recall of the Russian officers. The Cossack Brigade is the only force which can be relied on to keep order in the capital, and it owes its efficiency solely to the fact that it is officered by foreigners, who maintain fairly good discipline and *see that the men are regularly paid*. If the Russians were withdrawn and replaced by Persians it would not be long before peculations began, discipline would suffer, and the force would degenerate to the level of the rest of the Persian army. As it is, even now Sipahsalar's troops are not allowed by Colonel Liakhoff, as Military Governor of Tehran, to enter the town armed, for fear that they would create a disturbance and commence pillaging the shops and bazaar. On the other hand, I think that if we and the Russians are to work harmoniously, Colonel Liakhoff should be removed, as I have no doubt whatever that he is strongly anti-English, and has infected his men with the same sentiments. The younger officers I think are much more friendly.

As to reforms, I quite agree with M. Isvolsky that there are no men or parties in Persia competent to carry them out. I go even further, and doubt whether there is any considerable proportion of Persians who desire reforms, in the Western sense of the word. All that the nation wants is a reasonable degree of security for trade and the certainty that the extortions practised on the people to find money for the extravagances of Muzaffer-ed-Din Shah and his Court shall not be renewed. For the former purpose the formation of a well-disciplined gendarmerie under European officers should suffice. Security for trade would be welcomed by all classes, and would reconcile public opinion to the employment of foreigners. The difficulty would be to obtain the necessary funds to pay the force, but I believe that if the finances of the country were reasonably well administered plenty of money would be forthcoming. Reorganization in the Ministry of Finance, moreover, would be the surest way of putting an end to the speculation and corruption now rampant.

The measures of reform which I would suggest are therefore only these two: formation of a gendarmerie under European officers and reform of the finances by the Financial Adviser.

The chief opposition will come from the Shah and the Court party.  
(Initialled) C. M. M.

[40464]

No. 209.

*Mr. C. Stevens to Foreign Office.—(Received November 19.)*

*Wilton Hotel, Wilton Road, Victoria, London,  
November 19, 1908.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated the 18th instant, contents of which I have carefully noted.

I am perfectly satisfied with the replies you give me concerning claims for £T. 300, taxes on silkworm eggs and losses owing to recent disturbances in Persia.

With regard to the sheep easings monopoly, and especially the management of Urumia Lake Concession, I much regret to say that I have been most disappointed. Owing to the situation in Tabreez I am obliged to return as soon as possible, and have but three or four days more to remain in London, which does not give me enough time to write or receive a reply from you. I therefore beg that you should grant me, if possible, a private interview of a few minutes, at your earliest convenience, when I shall endeavour to impress you with the absolute justness of my requests.

Thanking you in advance, I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES E. STEVENS.

[40416]

No. 210.

*Mr. M. Ellinger to Foreign Office.—(Received November 19.)*

Sir,

*28, Oxford Street, Manchester, November 18, 1908.*

THE Mouin-ut-Tujjer writes my firm, with reference to his Concession of the Island of Hormuz, that a British firm is negotiating with the Persian Legation in London for the purchase of the Concession from the Persian Government.

I presume that my firm will be quite correct in informing the Mouin-ut-Tujjer that so long as the sale of the oxide is in the hands of my firm, no application to the Persian Government by any other British subject for the grant of the Concession of the Island of Hormuz, and consequent confiscation of the Concession now held in perpetuity by the Mouin-ut-Tujjer, will receive the support of His Majesty's Government here or the British Legation in Tehran, and I shall be glad to hear that this is so.

Yours faithfully,  
(Signed) M. ELLINGER.

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No. 211.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 19.)*

(No. 386.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 19, 1908.*

SHAH and Constitution.

I have been informed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the institution of a Council to be appointed by His Majesty is contemplated by the Shah. I have expressed my disappointment that the Shah should in such a fashion seek to evade his pledges, and I have pointed out that it is an essential feature of any constitutional régime that there should be an Assembly elected by the people. The two or three Ministers to whose sinister influence the present deplorable state of the country is largely due would have complete control over the Council it is proposed to appoint.

I think that, should no satisfactory measure be announced during the next few days, further steps at Bagh-i-Shah should be taken by the two Legations. The action of the two Legations should, I am of opinion, be joint.

The Shah, who would talk more freely and openly to our dragomans than to the Representatives, might be asked to receive them, and our representations might usefully take the form of a frank conversation.

It would be the task of the dragomans to endeavour to make His Majesty understand that the two Governments were equally desirous of seeing the tranquillity of Persia restored and her prosperity safeguarded, and that by urging the establishment of a constitutional régime they were best helping him to realize these objects. The lines of the previous representations would be followed by the dragomans in their conversation, and they would press His Majesty to consult the few men capable of giving good advice as to what form the Assembly best suited to the needs of the country should take.

M. Sabline, to whom I have given a rough sketch of the lines of the proposed conversation, concurs, and is telegraphing to his Government accordingly.

It appears to me particularly desirable that joint representations of some kind should be made at this moment, as there are indications that the *velléités* of the Austrian Minister, who is now doyen, for collective action have been aroused by M. de Hartwig's departure, and by the petition reported in my telegram No. 381 of the 16th instant.

[40441]

No. 212.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 19.)*

(No. 387.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 19, 1908.*

RETENTION of guard for Oil Syndicate. My telegram No. 364 of the 7th instant.

I learn from His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire that Wilson is, on the whole, in favour of retaining the guard over the next hot weather. Lieutenant

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Wilson reports that his men have now erected rough accommodation sufficient for the comfort of men and horses, and that this will last a year, if necessary. He suggests, on grounds which he is explaining by letter, that, as the question of accommodation is no longer urgent, final decision in regard to the retention of the guard should be postponed for a few weeks longer.

[40466]

No. 213.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 19.)*

(No. 388.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

SHAH and Constitution.

Tehran, November 19, 1908.

My telegram No. 386 of this morning was dispatched before I received your telegram No. 322 dated yesterday.

A threat of the nature you suggest would convince the Shah that His Majesty's Government and the Russian Government are in earnest, and I feel sure that even if it were merely hinted, it would be quite sufficient to bring him to reason. The consequences of a departure from the principle of strict non-intervention which the carrying out of such a threat would involve need not be taken into consideration, as it is scarcely conceivable that it would be necessary to execute it; but I should mention that M. de Hartwig and I used the following words to His Majesty at our audiences last week:—

"The cardinal principle of the policy of Russia and Great Britain in Persia is, as your Majesty is aware, non-intervention in her internal affairs. The two Governments will not depart from this principle. Nevertheless, in their capacity as friendly and neighbouring Powers sincerely desiring the prosperity and peaceful development of Persia, with which country they are in the closest relations, the two countries have always deemed it their duty to assist as far as they can with good advice the Government of the Shah."

In view of this language you may think it well to postpone using the threat until after the representations which I proposed in my telegram No. 386 of to-day have been made. That a joint representation should be made to the Shah without delay is, however, very desirable.

[40250]

No. 214.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 323.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

PERSIAN Representative in London.

Foreign Office, November 19, 1908.

It must be clearly understood that Mushir-ul-Mulk's appointment is only a temporary one. With this proviso it meets with the approval of His Majesty the King.

[40517]

No. 215.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 20.)*

Sir,

India Office, November 18, 1908.

WITH reference to your letter dated the 22nd November, 1907, agreeing to the increase of the Ahwaz guard at an estimated recurring cost of 2,280 rupees a-month, of which half was to be borne by British funds, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to inclose, to be laid before the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a letter from the Government of India, recommending that Lieutenant Wilson and Lieutenant Ranking, who were placed in charge of the additional force, should receive a total monthly salary of approximately 718 rupees, with effect from the date of their landing at Mohammerah, towards the close of last year.

The effect of the proposal is to increase by 336 rupees approximately the total

monthly sum of 2,280 rupees at which the cost of sending the additional force was originally estimated in the telegram of the Government of India dated the 11th November, 1907, raising it to 2,616 rupees.

Viscount Morley agrees in the view of the Government of India that the existing salary of the officers named, viz., 500 rupees a-month, cannot reasonably be regarded as adequate, in the conditions of their service in Persia, and he would suggest that, if Sir E. Grey sees no objection, the facts of the case should be represented to the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, with a view to their acceptance of a moiety of the increased expenditure involved in the proposal of the Government of India as a charge against Imperial revenues.

I am, &amp;c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 215.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.*

My Lord,

Simla, October 8, 1908.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram dated the 22nd November, 1907, relative to the increase of the Ahwaz Consular guard, we have the honour to forward, for your Lordship's consideration, the accompanying copy of a letter from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, in which he recommends that a local allowance, at the rate of 200 rupees a-month, may be sanctioned to Lieutenant Wilson, the officer on duty with the guard of the D'Arcy Oil Syndicate in Arabistan, with effect from the date of his taking charge of his present appointment, and that a similar concession should be granted to Lieutenant Ranking, who is now, under the authority of your Lordship's telegram of the 20th July, 1908, attached to the Vice-Consulate at Ahwaz.

2. We concur with the views expressed by Major Cox that, having regard to the high cost of living in Persia and the exceptionally arduous conditions under which these officers have been working, the consolidated pay at the rate of 500 rupees a-month which Lieutenants Wilson and Ranking now draw cannot be regarded as adequate.

In lieu, however, of increasing their present emoluments by a local allowance at the rate of 200 rupees a-month, we recommend that both officers should receive, with effect from the date of their landing at Mohammerah, till such time as they are relieved of their present duties, the pay of their rank, i.e., rupees 325 : 12 : 0, in addition to exchange compensation allowance and a local allowance at the rate of 350 rupees a-month, or a total monthly salary of approximately 718 rupees, which cannot, we consider, in the circumstances be considered excessive. The estimated monthly cost, viz., 2,280 rupees, of the arrangements for the protection of the camps of the D'Arcy Oil Syndicate, which was reported in our telegram dated the 11th November, 1907, was based on the assumption that the two officers in charge of the guard would draw pay at the rate of 600 rupees and 500 rupees a-month respectively. While, therefore, the actual increased cost involved in our present proposal amounts to 436 rupees a-month, the total estimated monthly cost will only be increased by 336 rupees approximately, i.e., to 2,616 rupees.

We trust that this recommendation will meet with your Lordship's approval, and that His Majesty's Government will accept a moiety of the increased charges.

It would be convenient if orders on the subject could be communicated to us by telegraph.

We have, &amp;c.

(Signed)

MINTO.

KITCHENER.

C. H. SCOTT.

H. ADAMSON.

W. L. HARVEY.

J. S. MESTON.



Inclosure 2 in No. 215.

*Major Cox to Government of India.**Bushire, May 31, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to forward, for the favourable consideration of the Government of India, a copy of a letter, dated the 18th May, 1908, which I have received from Lieutenant A. T. Wilson, on duty with the guard of the D'Arcy Oil Syndicate in Arabistan, and in which he explains his present position from a financial point of view as compared with his position with his regiment.

2. In view of the circumstances explained by Lieutenant Wilson and of my own knowledge of the conditions of life in the country in which he is, and also having regard to the useful work which he and his comrades are doing, I respectfully beg to commend Lieutenant Wilson's representation to the favourable consideration of the Government of India, and venture to hope that a local allowance of 200 rupees per mensem may be sanctioned to him, with effect from the date of his taking charge of his present appointment.

Any orders which the Government of India may be pleased to pass in Lieutenant Wilson's case will, I hope, be made applicable to Lieutenant Ranking as well.

Inclosure 3 in No. 215.

*Lieutenant Wilson to Major Cox.**Ahwaz, May 18, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to represent, in the hope of favourable consideration, my position here from a financial point of view.

The case is as follows:—

Government has fixed my pay at 500 rupees. If I was with my regiment I should be drawing not less than 450 rupees, perhaps more.

My exceptional position here involves heavy expense, and I am thus worse off than if I was with my regiment, although I have exchanged the amenities of regimental life for a solitary existence in a tent during a Persian summer in its least attractive guise.

Servants here are expensive in the extreme (the C.S.L. have forced up prices to an incredible degree).

Every ounce of eatables has to be imported from Shushtar by mule caravan—a heavy expense. All stores, such as tea, coffee, &c., must be ordered from Bombay, shipped to Shushtar, and thence by caravan here, mules being hired for the purpose. Customs duties must be paid (I am not exempt like Consuls). Postage on letters and parcels is a heavy item.

The result is that I am pecuniarily worse off here than in India, for I draw 500 rupees here, where the sepoy draws 50 rupees, and 450 rupees there, where the sepoy draws 10 rupees.

I respectfully request that Government may be asked to grant me a local allowance, from the date of taking up my duties with the Oil Syndicate, at the same rate as the Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, for whilst I have not so many outgoings as he, such as I have are far costlier, as my distance from the Karun and Shushtar practically doubles the cost of freight from Bombay, and servants and food are twice as costly as in Ahwaz.

I should be very grateful for your support in the matter.  
Apologizing for troubling you.

[40590]

No. 216.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 20.)*

(No. 263.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 20, 1908.*

PERSIA. Telegram No. 389 from Tehran.

The St. Petersburg press published a few days ago a telegram from Tabreez, in which it was stated that Satar Khan had received a decoration from the Turkish

Government. To-day's papers contain a denial, stating that the telegram is a pure fiction. This denial is published at the request of the Turkish Embassy, acting on official information received from Constantinople.

[40546]

No. 217.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 20.)*

(No. 389.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 20, 1908.*

SITUATION at Tabreez. My telegrams Nos. 373 and 385, dated the 14th and 18th instant respectively.

A report has been received by the Russian Legation from the Russian Consul-General at Tabreez that the Turkish Government have presented Satta Khan with a decoration. Mr. Wratislaw understands that the "decoration" was sent to Satta Khan by his admirers at Constantinople, and that it was merely a medal in commemoration of the Turkish Constitution, which anyone can buy.

The story, and that of the activity of German officers at Tabreez, are instances of the alarmist reports sent by the Russian Consul-General, who is possessed of the idea that Azerbaijan is likely to become, with the support of Turkey and Germany, an autonomous province, and is eager to twist anything into evidence in support of the theory.

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No. 218.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 604.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 20, 1908.*

SHAH and Constitution.

The Russian Representative will, I hope, be instructed to act in the sense of the suggestion made in Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 386, to which I entirely agree.

[40464]

No. 219.

*Foreign Office to Mr. C. E. Stevens.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 20, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant on the subject of your claims against the Persian Government.

I am to inform you in reply that Sir E. Grey regrets that he is unable to modify the decision conveyed to you in my letter of the 18th instant, respecting sheep casings and the management of the Concession on Lake Urumia.

I am, &amp;c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[40746]

No. 220.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 21.)*

(No. 390.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 21, 1908.*

SITUATION in Azerbaijan.

Mr. Wratislaw reports from Tabreez that a force of nationalists occupied Maraga on the 16th instant, and that the Acting Governor fled.

At Dilwan, the nationalist party have re-established an Anjuman, and it seems likely that Urmia will follow their example.



[40701]

No. 221.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 324.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 21, 1908.*

PERSIA. Your telegram No. 374 of the 14th November respecting the negotiations for the exchange of telegraph lines.

Subject to the provision that the negotiations with regard to the Ahwaz-Borasjun line are not prolonged for an indefinite period, your action has my approval.

[40749]

No. 222.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 22.)*

(No. 265.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 22, 1908.*

PERSIA. Your telegram No. 604 of the 20th instant.

Russian Representative at Tehran has already been instructed to act in accordance with Sir G. Barclay's suggestion.

[40747]

No. 223.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 22.)*

(No. 391.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 22, 1908.*

SHAH and Constitution.

The Grand Vizier informed me yesterday that the Shah, as a result of the demonstration against the Constitution which was held at Baghi Shah on Thursday, has sent a Rescript to be printed, in which he declares that he will not grant an Assembly which is contrary to Islam. Though the wording of the document is purposely vague, it is generally understood to mean that His Majesty refuses to grant an elective Assembly of any kind.

It appears urgent that joint representations should be made at once, and M. Sabline and I are presenting a joint Memorandum to the Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day, in which we express our surprise and regret that His Majesty, in violation of his pledges, should have come to such a regrettable decision, in which he follows the advice of evil councillors and responds to petitions which do not reflect the real feelings of the nation. While expressing our conviction that the only way of quieting the people, who are in revolt in Azerbaijan, and in a state of anxiety and effervescence in the capital and other provinces of the Empire, is to re-establish the Constitution, we state that we are expecting instructions from our Governments to make further representations.

[40748]

No. 224.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 22.)*

(No. 392.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 22, 1908.*

SHAH and Constitution.

Referring to my telegram No. 391, dated to-day, I have to report that the Shah's Rescript has appeared. The tone of the document is entirely uncompromising, and states that His Majesty has quite abandoned any idea of convoking a Parliament, as the Ulama have declared that such an institution is contrary to Islam.

Since I proposed a frank discussion between the two Dragomans and the Shah the situation has changed, and I think that some kind of menace should be included in our next representations. I have every confidence that a threat from Russia to withdraw the Russian officers of the Cossack brigade or the threat proposed in your telegram No. 322 of the 18th instant would be efficacious. The necessity of some kind of menace is agreed to by the Russian Legation.

[40829]

No. 225.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 280.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 18, 1908.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 279 of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith the English version of the identic note, by which the Russian Minister and I have made to the Persian Government the communication agreed upon by His Majesty's Government and the Russian Government respecting the intention of the Porte, as stated to Sir G. Lowther and M. de Zenoviev, to recall without delay the Turkish troops from beyond the neutral zone, and its resolve to arrive at a friendly solution of the frontier question.

Some delay has occurred in the presentation of this communication, owing to the fact that the news received from Urumia by my Russian colleague was not altogether so favourable as that contained in Sir G. Lowther's telegram No. 279 of the 29th ultimo.

M. de Hartwig suggested that I should inquire of Mr. Wratislaw whether the withdrawal of the Turkish troops was continuing. I did so, but though I have had no answer, the recall of Mr. Wratislaw to Tabreez, of which I have informed the Persian Government, seemed to afford so good an opportunity for making the identic communication that I suggested to M. de Hartwig that we should delay no longer.

He agreed, and the note has been sent in by both Legations to-day.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 225.

*Sir G. Barclay to Ala-es-Sultaneh.*

Your Highness,

*Tehran, October 18, 1908.*

IN obedience to instructions from His Majesty's Government, I have the honour to address the following communication to your Highness:—

It is with sincere satisfaction that His Majesty's Government are in a position to inform the Persian Government that the Ottoman Government have stated to them that the Turkish troops who have penetrated into Persian territory, beyond the contested zone, will be recalled without delay, and that the Porte is resolved to arrive at a friendly solution of the present difficulties and differences with Persia.

In bringing the above to the knowledge of the Persian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, His Majesty's Legation hopes that the Persian Government on their part will show consideration and moderation in this matter, in order that the frontier differences which exist between them and the Turkish Government may be settled easily and definitely.

I avail, &c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[40830]

No. 226.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 281.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 19, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 168 of the 15th ultimo, in which you were so good as to invite my observations on a despatch from His Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin, summarizing an article by Herr Mygind in the "Berliner Tageblatt" regarding the development of German trade in South-West Persia.

In regard to the proposal that concessions should be obtained on behalf of German subjects to exploit oil deposits in Persia, I venture to point out that, by the terms of the Concession granted to Mr. d'Arcy by the Persian Government in 1901 for a period of sixty years (see especially Articles 1, 2, and 6), the Persian Government are precluded from granting such concession to any person whatsoever in any part of Persia with the exception of the Provinces of Azerbaijan, Ghilan, Mazanderan, Astarabad, and Khorassan, and then only on the condition that no pipe line is constructed to the southern rivers or to the south coast of Persia.



It is therefore impossible for any concession of the nature suggested by Herr Mygind to be obtained on behalf of German subjects in any but the districts mentioned. I have no doubt that in these districts the Russian Legation could, and would, block any application for such a concession, and I have thought it well to draw my Russian colleague's attention to Herr Mygind's article.

I cannot help thinking that the articles on Persia, contributed by Herr Mygind to his newspaper, are mischievous; they are certainly misleading.

Beyond the fact that through our trade and commercial enterprise we do possess a large influence in South-West Persia, Herr Mygind is apparently unable to formulate any charge against us; yet his articles breathe a spirit of jealousy and hostility to England, while his insinuation that the principle of the open door is not maintained, and that the development of German trade is opposed by any other than legitimate competition borders on the offensive.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[40831]

No. 227.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 282.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 19, 1908.*

WITH reference to Mr. Marling's despatch No. 116 of the 20th May and to your despatch No. 102 of the 22nd June, I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of further correspondence which has passed between this Legation and the Persian Government on the subject of Messrs. Lynch's claim for the repayment of the running expenses of the steam-ship "Shushan."

Mr. Marling was of opinion that, without unduly prejudicing the case presented by this Legation, he could not allow Ala-es-Sultaneh's note of the 30th July to remain unanswered, but, considering that his Highness in his last note of the 8th October merely reiterates arguments which have already been countered, I propose, subject to your approval, Sir, to drop the correspondence on the subject until its renewal is necessitated by the presentation of the current year's accounts.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 227.

*Ala-es-Sultaneh to Mr. Marling.*

*July 30, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 18th May last respecting the expenses of the steam-ship "Shushan."

In reply, I beg to state, as has been already mentioned in my predecessor's note of the 2nd May last, his Excellency Nizam-us-Sultaneh does not remember to have made any communication on the subject to Messrs. Lynch when Governor-General of Arabistan, and this Department is not either aware of his Excellency's note referred to in your note.

It is clear that the Governors-General of Arabistan have never had any instructions to interfere with the administration of the "Shushan."

As to your statement that the account of the income and expenditure of the ship in question has been regularly sent to the Foreign Office, I do not consider it superfluous to remind you that whenever the Foreign Office has received the accounts of the "Shushan" it has informed the Legation of the refusal of the Persian Government in interfering with those accounts.

As to the statement of my predecessor in his note that no statement of the accounts has been seen, I beg to remark that his Excellency no doubt is aware that the Persian Government have never looked at them with eyes of acceptance, and have always referred to the note of this Department dated Moharrem 1312.

I feel confident that under these circumstances, and having full knowledge of the history of the case, you will admit that from the time that the ship has been in

the hands of Messrs. Lynch the Persian Government has not interfered with her administration, and have not accepted her income or expenditure.

(Signed) ALA-ES-SULTANEH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 227.

*Mr. Marling to Ala-es-Sultaneh.*

Your Highness,

*Gulahek, September 14, 1908.*

WITH reference to your Highness' note of the 30th July respecting the expenses of the steam-ship "Shushan," I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of his Excellency Nizam-us-Sultaneh's communication referred to in my note of the 18th May last.

As regards the contention of your Highness' predecessor that the Persian Government have at no time seen the account of the income and expenditure of the ship, I venture still to maintain that the information, whose absence was supposed to place the Persian Government at a disadvantage, was accessible to them, and that this Legation cannot reasonably be held responsible for the failure of the Persian Government to acquaint themselves with the contents of documents forwarded to them in an official communication.

(Signed) C. M. MARLING.

Inclosure 3 in No. 227.

*Ala-es-Sultaneh to Sir G. Barclay.*

*October 8, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Marling's note of the 14th September last respecting the accounts of the income and expenditure of the steam-ship "Shushan," transmitting a copy of a letter from the late Nizam-us-Sultaneh dated 14th Zikadeh, 1307. In reply, I have to state that, as already stated in the notes addressed by my predecessors, the Nizam-us-Sultaneh stated his ignorance of the letter in question, and I beg to point out that the letter in any case had been written several years before the note of this Department dated Moharrem 1312, the contents of which have been several times repeated to the British Legation.

With regard to the accounts of the income and expenditure of the "Shushan," to which the Legation has referred in its note, I have to point out that, as already stated in my note of the 30th July, the Persian Government has never looked with the eyes of acceptance on the accounts sent by the Company, since the income and expenditure of the ship did not concern them, and have repeatedly declared their non-interference with her.

I avail, &c.  
(Signed) ALA-ES-SULTANEH.

[40833]

No. 228.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 284.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 20, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Consul-General Wratislaw respecting the withdrawal of Turkish troops from the neighbourhood of Urumia.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[1622]

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Inclosure in No. 228.

*Consul-General Wratislaw to Mr. Marling.*

(No. 16.)

Sir,

*Urumia, September 24, 1908.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 55 of to-day's date, I have the honour to report that during the last fortnight considerable reduction has been made in the strength of the Turkish troops along the frontier from Lahijan northwards. Owing to the complete interruption of communications with the south, I cannot supply details concerning Lahijan and Pasveh, but in Mergaver, Tergaver, and Baranduz only one battalion remains, under the command of a Binbashi. The six guns formerly in Tergaver were removed towards the west of Baradost a fortnight ago, and are supposed to have been taken thence to Van. In Somai and Charik I hear that only one company, or at most two are left. Only a handful of soldiers are believed to remain in Baradost.

Yaver Pasha quitted Tergaver ten days ago, and is believed to have gone to Van. The district is well rid of this rascal, who certainly instigated the Kurdish raid last June, and whose corruption is a scandal even to the Turkish army. Before leaving, he summoned the leading Harkai and Begzadeh Kurds before him, and told them that the orders were that they should annex no more Persian territory, but that they should repulse by force any attempt on the part of the Persians to regain what was already occupied.

On the 21st instant, some Turkish soldiers accompanied by Herkai Kurds advanced as far as Dizel, in the Baranduz district. The Persian Cossack Colonel who commands the small Persian garrison in the neighbouring village of Baranduz accordingly visited Dizel, in order to ascertain with his own eyes whether the Turks were really there, and having done so, returned to Baranduz. Thereupon the Binbashi wrote him a furious letter, accusing him of "violating Turkish territory," and asking him whether he wanted to fight. The Persian applied to Muhteshem-es-Sultaneh for instructions, and the latter asked my opinion as to the advisability of resisting by force any further Turkish aggression in that district. I told him that it would be the height of folly to risk a collision with the Turks just as the Turkish Government showed some sign of a disposition to settle the frontier question.

Saatlu, near Dizerteke in the same district, has also been visited lately by a party of Turkish soldiers. Their renewed activity is probably prompted by a desire to collect as much in the way of taxes as they can while opportunity offers.

On the 22nd instant some Turkish soldiers called at the village of Gavilan, near Kutchi, in Anzel, and threatened the inhabitants with condign punishment unless they submitted to Omer Agha, the Shekoik Chief, whom the Turks have put in charge of the district.

The same district of Anzel has been exposed during the past fortnight to renewed depredations on the part of the Shekoik Kurds of Somai. These began with the plunder of a caravan near Kutchi, from which twenty-three loads of sugar were taken. On the 17th instant, the outgoing post from Urumia to Tabreez was attacked by Somai Kurds, the whole outfit including cart, horses, and letters carried off, and two travellers killed. The same thing happened to the incoming post from Tabreez this morning, which was captured near the village of Kulungi by Somai Kurds, aided by the inhabitants of Kulungi and other Sunni villages. The Turks who are in occupation of Somai must have connived at this outrage.

Nothing is known here of the whereabouts of the Turkish Commissioners, who left Urumia four weeks ago, promising to return in a fortnight; and with Ramazan so near it seems unlikely that they will reappear in the immediate future.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

[40834]

No. 229.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 285.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 22, 1908.*

WITH reference to Mr. Marling's despatch No. 207 of the 12th August last, I have the honour to report that M. Bizot, the Financial Adviser, called upon me yesterday, and showed me a document which had been handed to him by the Grand

Vizier, and which purported to be an itemized statement of the arrears due to the Army, Diplomatic, Consular officers, pensioners, retainers of the Palace, money changers, and others. I do not think I need trouble you with a copy of this document. It will suffice to say that items are shown amounting to over 500,000*l.*, and that it is, at least, an improvement on the statement of pressing needs, on which Mr. Marling reported in his above-mentioned despatch.

M. Bizot tells me that, when handing this document to him, the Grand Vizier appeared to think that an advance of 400,000*l.* would be forthcoming immediately—indeed, he spoke of the money as being ready in a strong box for M. Bizot to hand over at once. M. Bizot explained that the matter was not so simple, and that, though he would communicate the statement to the two Legations, he could hold out no hope of their being so far satisfied with the information it contained as to recommend to their Governments the advance which the Grand Vizier seemed to expect.

Although M. Bizot recognizes that the present itemized statement is a step in advance, and contains some useful information, it is not what he has been asking for. In order to be in a position to judge of the needs of the Persian Government, and to consider what measures are necessary to insure the proper expenditure of the money to be advanced by the two Governments, he requires a statement showing the receipts and expenditure of each Ministry, and, so far, no genuine attempt has been made to satisfy this requirement.

I saw the Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon, and, in the course of conversation, adverted to M. Bizot's visit. M. Bizot is still so much in the dark as regards the financial situation that it would have been premature for me to make any mention of the conditions, as stated in your telegram No. 244 of the 5th September last, on which His Majesty's Government would be willing to join with Russia in making an advance to the Persian Government, and I merely told his Highness that the statement was inadequate for the requirements of the Financial Adviser, and that until M. Bizot had obtained the information which he had for so long been seeking in vain, I could not think of submitting to my Government any application for an advance. Ala-es-Sultaneh showed no surprise; he was evidently well aware of the unsatisfactory nature of the document, from which so much had apparently been expected by the Grand Vizier.

The Russian Minister, while recognizing that the present statement is a step in advance—indeed, he lays considerable stress on this point—has expressed himself as in entire accord with me as to the necessity of eliciting further information before we can even consider the terms on which the joint advance can be made.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[40835]

No. 230.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 286.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 26, 1908.*

IN your despatch No. 177 of the 29th ultimo you were good enough to forward to me the paraphrase of a telegram from the Viceroy of India, objecting to the appointment of Hashmat-ul-Mulk as Governor of Kain in the place of Shaukat-ul-Mulk.

You are aware from the despatches No. 257 of the 11th ultimo and No. 269 of the 2nd instant from this Legation of the steps taken by Mr. Marling in support of the Shaukat. Although, at his audience of the Shah on the 24th ultimo, Mr. Marling received from His Majesty a promise that he would re-examine the question, I regret to state that I have not been able to secure the reinstatement of the Shaukat, my representations being met with the reply that, after a re-examination of the circumstances of the case, the Shah could not see his way to disregard the numerous telegrams he had received from the inhabitants of the province, praying for the Shaukat's removal. I do not think any useful end would be served by pressing the matter further.

The objection of the Government of India to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk's appointment is due to its having been obtained through the financial assistance of the Russian Bank. This is not an objection which could be urged to the Persian Government, and no doubt the bank itself would say that the advance, which I believe has since been repaid, was made in the ordinary way of business.



The representations of the Legation, which the Russian Minister gave Mr. Marling to understand he was supporting, have throughout been based on the danger of disorders in the province should Hashmat-ul-Mulk be appointed. Our case has been somewhat weakened by the strong stand we made in support of Hashmat-ul-Mulk several years ago.

The apparent inconsistency of our attitude has, of course, not escaped the Persian Government.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[40836]

No. 231.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 287.)

Sir,

Tehran, November 4, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the usual monthly summary of events in Persia during the past four weeks.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 231.

No. 11.—*Monthly Summary of Events in Persia.*

*Tehran.*

THE Shah continues to reside in the military camp formed on the 4th June at Bagh-i-Shah. Amir Behadur, the Sepahsalar or Commander-in-chief, is still to the front, and the reactionary régime is in full swing. Rumours have been current that the reverses sustained by the Shah's forces at Tabreez, for which Amir Behadur was held responsible, had brought about his downfall. Farman Farma arrived at Tehran at the beginning of October and is supposed to be intriguing to obtain Amir Behadur's post. Vekil-ed-Dowleh, one of the late Shah's courtiers, was arrested at the end of October and taken to Bagh-i-Shah, where he was severely bastinadoed and then expelled to Kashan. He was accused of agitating in favour of the Nationalists, but had in reality thrown in his lot with Farman Farma, whom it was intended to frighten by making an example. Farman Farma, in conversation with a member of His Majesty's Legation, hinted that he might be obliged to seek British protection.

2. A force of Persian Cossacks, estimated at about 400 men with four guns, left Tehran for Tabreez on the 12th October. Captain Ouchakoff left Tehran on the 19th October to join this force at Kazvin. He subsequently returned to Tehran. In the meantime the Tabreez Nationalists obtained complete mastery over the Shah's forces, and Ain-ed-Dowleh retired, as reported in a separate despatch. Preparations are now being talked of for the dispatch of a large body of troops to Tabreez, including some newly arrived Bakhtiari.

3. Salar-ed-Dowleh, the Shah's younger brother, who revolted in Luristan during the summer of 1907, has now left for Europe. He had been under military supervision at Tehran for some time.

4. Colonel Liakhoff is still Military Governor of Tehran, and the police force is now under his orders and is paid regularly through him. The Civil Governor, Prince Moayed-ed-Dowleh, G.C.M.G., has shown some disposition to resent Colonel Liakhoff's interference in matters which he considers do not pertain to the Colonel's official sphere. A ludicrous incident was described to a member of His Majesty's Legation by one of the foreign Representatives which the latter stated he had heard from Colonel Liakhoff himself. It is not worthy of special reference beyond showing that Colonel Liakhoff's new duties assumed since the *coup d'Etat* of the 23rd June occasionally bring him into conflict with his civil colleague.

5. It was generally felt, as reported in the last summary, that the Shah's Rescript promising an Electoral Law for the 27th October and the opening of the second National Assembly (described in the Rescript as "an Assembly") was not intended seriously and that it had been wrung from him, more as a matter of form, by the joint representations

of the British and Russian Legations. As the time drew near for the issue of the promised Electoral Law, inquiries were made as to whether or not steps had been taken to elaborate such a document, but, although the Minister for Foreign Affairs stated to His Majesty's Minister that it was actually ready, it was quite clear that he was only obeying orders in making this statement and that he himself had not seen the document, nor could he or any one else throw any light on the subject. In the meantime, as the time approached for the fulfilment of the Shah's promise, various reports obtained currency which clearly emanated from the Court, to the effect that the provinces had telegraphed declaring that they did not wish for a new Parliament. On the 28th October the Shah's printer stated that the Electoral Law was under the press and would be published the following day, but later gave out that the publication had been postponed indefinitely. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, when questioned on the subject, stated that he and his colleagues had spent the whole day on the 26th October elaborating the Law, which had been completed, but was again being modified.

6. Mohandis-ul-Mamalek, K.C.M.G., the Minister of Public Works, sent his son on the 3rd November to His Majesty's Legation to say that the Shah had told him confidentially that he intended appointing him Minister for Foreign Affairs. He wished to know what view His Majesty's Minister would take of the appointment. Ala-es-Sultaneh, he said, would probably go to Constantinople as Ambassador.

7. The clergy of Nejed have sent a very violently worded telegram to the Shah stating that his "conduct wounds the heart of the believer, and is an offence against the absent Imam," and that they would "leave no stone unturned to obtain a representative Government." The message ends with the following passage: "God has cursed the tyrants; you are victorious for the moment, but you may not remain so." A translation of this telegram has been received from His Majesty's Representative at Bagdad, and copies have been, it seems, widely spread at Tehran.

8. M. Sabline, the new Russian Councillor, is expected here in a week.

9. Mr. Fergusson, Reuter's correspondent, has arrived from Constantinople.

10. M. Cezari, the Corsican Customs official who showed so much activity in Seistan and at Kermanshah, died a few days ago at Tehran.

11. Captain Angineur, of the French Army, has arrived at Tehran from Tabreez, where he stayed three weeks. He is proceeding to the south via Ispahan and Shiraz.

(Signed) G. P. CHURCHILL.

November 4, 1908.

*Tabreez.*

The situation is reported upon fully in a separate despatch.

*Resht.*

1. His Majesty's Vice-Consul states that numbers of Constitutionals had intended taking refuge at the Consulate on the day of Sir George Barclay's arrival as a protest against the Shah's failure to keep his promise to summon a new Parliament three months after the dispersion of the late one. The Minister's very short stay at Resht, however, upset their plans.

2. The port works at Enzeli are not progressing very rapidly. A few wooden houses have been constructed on the Enzeli side, and the pier on the Kazian side has been carried on a few yards. According to the Russian Consul-General the works will be finished in two years; but this statement has been repeatedly made before.

*Meshed.*

1. Prince Dabija, the new Russian Consul-General, arrived on the 8th October, and called on His Majesty's Consul-General on the 11th. Major Sykes returned his call the next day.

2. His Majesty's Consul-General has recently received many requests from Constitutionalists for permission to take refuge in the Consulate-General, all of which have been refused.

3. It appears that the Russian Consul-General is trying to secure the dismissal of the Karguzar. The latter is growing old, but is the most reasonable and least dishonest



Karguzar Major Sykes has yet met. Major Sykes has therefore advised him to do his best to settle Russian cases.

4. Herat reports that 800 families of Jamshedis have returned to their homes. This should settle this question.

#### *Turbat-i-Hayderi.*

1. A party of 150 robbers attacked a caravan at Chil Paya, on the Kerman road, and carried off seventy camels with their loads. Four camelmen were killed, and four are missing.

2. On the 9th October a Notice was posted up on the city gate that the Shah had ordered elections for a new National Assembly to be held on the 23rd October, to be conducted in accordance with religious law. Tabreez was excluded.

3. Captain Watson recently visited Karez. When he left that place the Russians sent a spy to report on his movements.

4. Twenty-two Russian Cossacks arrived on the 18th September from Karez in relief of Captain Lyass' escort. The Karez detachment of one officer and eleven Cossacks had also been relieved. During October two Cossacks passed through on their way from Meshed to Birjand, and ten from Karez, of whom six were for Bunder Abbas and four for Kerman.

5. Karez reports that the Russian Government have sent 300*l.* arrears of pay for the Timuri sowars employed on the quarantine cordon.

#### *Ispahan.*

1. The Governor-General has not been able to come to terms with the Bakhtiari Khans as to the charge of the roads, the government of Feridoon, and the command of the troops. He has attempted to enlist the Mollahs on his side, and the latter are consequently asserting themselves once more.

2. A telegram was published in Ispahan about the 9th October containing the Shah's orders for elections for a National Assembly to meet on the 14th November. Azerbaijan was not to have any representative.

3. Seif-ed-Dowleh, the new Governor of Arabistan, left Ispahan on the 15th October for his post.

4. All roads from Ispahan, the Tehran road excepted, are in the hands of robbers, and robberies of posts and caravans are frequent.

5. Captain Lorimer, Vice-Consul for Arabistan, left for Hamadan on the 9th October.

6. It appears that the Russian Consul-General is trying to get the Karguzar dismissed. The latter is a great friend of the Zil-es-Sultan, and this appears to be the reason why the Russians object to him.

#### *Yezd.*

1. From the reports of His Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul it appears that robberies are taking place daily on all roads leading to Yezd. The Governor has expressed himself unable to cope with the situation, trade is at a standstill, and the postal service entirely disorganized, the only posts recently received at Yezd being some which had remained in hiding in a village for some time and took advantage of the chance passing of the new Governor of Kerman to travel into Yezd with him.

2. The leader of the agitation at Yezd in the summer against excess taxes was being deported to Meshed when the caravan was attacked by robbers and he was shot dead. The people of Yezd believe that he was purposely shot by his own guards.

#### *Kerman.*

1. Nazim-et-Tujjar took refuge in the British Consulate early in September, but left after a few days.

2. Sahib Ekhtiar, the new Governor, arrived on the 21st September. He has appointed Moez-ed-Dowleh Deputy Governor and Saad-es-Sultaneh Vizier.

3. Robber bands from Fars have looted several villages in Kerman district, and most of the roads are infested with robbers.

#### *Kermanshah.*

1. The Shah recently sent a secret agent to the priests here to get their signatures to a paper stating that they did not require a Constitution.

2. The Russian Bank opened a branch here early in October. M. Pinne, the agent, is still here, but the bank is to be left in charge of an Armenian formerly in the service of the Imperial Bank of Persia. No work is being attempted at present, except the transfer of customs receipts. The Imperial Bank's business is increasing and has nearly doubled in the last few months.

3. On the 18th October a serious disturbance took place in Kermanshah arising out of the seizure by the sons of the Chief of Kalhur of the pretender to that title. Ten or fifteen persons were killed or wounded. The present Chief is very unpopular in the tribe, and the people rose and compelled the Governor to seize and imprison four of his sons.

#### *Shiraz.*

1. Assef-ed-Dowleh, the new Governor-General, arrived on the 21st September. His Majesty's Resident and Consul called on him on the 24th, when his manner was friendly and he showed himself prepared to discuss matters which were pending in a reasonable spirit. He called on the Resident and Consul on the 13th October and was very friendly, but his health is not good, and most things are left in the hands of Serdar Firouz and Ata-ed-Dowleh. The latest reports show that the Governor-General has been quite unable to restore order in Fars, and His Majesty's Consul is of opinion that the only remedy would be the appointment of a stronger man. On the 26th October Mr. Bill telegraphed that he had learnt secretly that a plot was on foot to expel the Governor-General and demand a Constitution. The troops were reported to have refused to march against the Arab tribesmen, on the ground that they had neither food nor cartridges.

2. On assurances of immunity being given by the Governor-General some of the refugees left the Consulate, but four still remained on the 7th October.

3. Dr. Pugin, an Alsatian German subject, engaged in pushing the sale of synthetic indigo, arrived from Ispahan at the end of September.

4. Many robberies are reported on the Bushire and Ispahan road. Several posts have been robbed between Ispahan and Shiraz.

5. On the 8th October the Chahar Mahal Regiment took refuge in a body at the Persian telegraph office demanding arrears of pay. Orders from Tehran to pay up all arrears having been received and a small instalment having been paid, they left on the 10th.

#### *PERSIAN GULF.*

##### *Bushire.*

1. On the 14th September the Darya Beggi received orders that he was dismissed from the Governorship of the Gulf Ports. He left soon after for Ispahan via Mohammerah, and the Shuja-ul-Mamalek took over the Governorship for Moaziz-ed-Dowleh. A few days later a telegram from Tehran for the Darya Beggi stated that the matter would be arranged and advised him to wait at Mohammerah, but on the 30th September the Deputy Governor received a telegram from the Moaziz-ed-Dowleh, the new Governor, saying that he was starting for Bushire.

2. Persian Mekran was in a very disturbed state during September owing to an attempt made by one Haji Nawab Khan, aided by the Chief of Geh, to oust Ahmed Khan from the joint Chiefship of Bahu. Ahmed Khan's brothers were holding Gwetter, where they were levying customs duties, while he and his fellow-Chief, Mir Ashref, were holding Bahu fort. Haji Nawab Khan was holding a fort at Bahu Kelat, 30 miles from Ahmed Khan's fort.

(Signed) C. B. STOKES, Major,  
Military Attache.



[40837]

No. 232.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 288. Secret.)

Sir,

*Tehran, November 4, 1908.*

IN your despatch No. 172, Secret, of the 19th September, you forwarded for Mr. Marling's observations the Russian Government's *aide-mémoire* of the 2nd August in regard to railway construction in Persia.

It cannot be said that the Russian proposals are encouraging. Judging from the *aide-mémoire* as interpreted by M. Poklewsky on the 3rd September (see your despatch No. 174, Secret, of the 24th September), it is apparently expected that London should provide the capital, His Majesty's Government guaranteeing the interest, for a railway which, with the conditions proposed, would destroy our trade in the Russian sphere. In order to preserve and develop the commercial interests of Russia in her zone, a network of railways in the north is projected, and, for the further safeguarding of her interests in this region, differential rates are contemplated. The enumeration of the secondary lines in contemplation in the Russian sphere naturally gives rise to reflections as to the desirability of similar lines in the south—such, for instance, as the line from Bunder Abbas to Shiraz, with possible extensions as circumstances may require. (See Foreign Office letter to India Office of the 25th September, 1907.) I notice, however, that M. Poklewsky has given it as his opinion that the branches mentioned in the *aide-mémoire* and the line from Askabad to Meshed are not intended to be considered with the Mohammerah-Julfa line. This is perhaps hardly reconcilable with the stipulation that the order of construction of the various lines in the Russian sphere must depend on the Russian interests involved, but, even admitting that M. Poklewsky's conception of the intentions of the Russian Government is correct, and that for the present we need only think of the main line, the loss to British trade in Persia, if handicapped by differential rates on that portion of the line within the Russian sphere, would be quite serious enough.

I do not know whether any decision has been taken as regards the alignment of the proposed railway, but I presume that it will pass through Tabreez, Kazvin, Hamadan, Burujird, Khorremabad, Dizful, Shuster, and Ahwaz. Our existing commercial interests, which would be directly affected by such a line, lie almost entirely within the Russian zone. Our trade, which now passes from the head of the Persian Gulf through Bagdad and Khanekin to Kermanshah and Hamadan, shows an increase during the last four years of from 700,000*l.* to 1,092,000*l.* Besides this, British goods to the value of about 150,000*l.* enter the Russian zone by Trebizond to Tabreez. Both these branches of British trade would evidently be diverted to the Mohammerah-Julfa Railway when built, and both, if given a fair chance, would then doubtless show considerable development; but, if the principle of differential treatment throughout the Russian zone is admitted, they are sure to be handicapped out of existence, which will be all the easier when Vladikavkas is linked up with Tiflis, and through traffic established from the districts north of the Caucasus.

Against this we might, I presume, count on an increase of trade in the neutral zone, resulting as time goes on from the development of the regions through which the line passes, but, though some of these possess no doubt great potential wealth, their development seems at present very remote. They are thinly populated, and a great part of the line will run through the most lawless districts in Persia. In any case we already monopolize such trade as there is in these parts, and our only gain would accrue from the expansion of trade already in our hands. In short, we should gain nothing at Russia's expense, whereas she would gain much at ours. On the other hand, it must be admitted that a railway from Mohammerah to Julfa, run on the purely "open-door" principle, would probably result in disaster for Russian vested interests. Possibly a workable arrangement might be devised by which the differential tariff could be restricted to the regions north of those fed from Kermanshah and Hamadan.

The advantages of an early application to the Persian Government for the desired concession are undeniable, and it is much to be hoped that Russia will abate her conditions, and that the *pourparlers* between the two Governments will result in an early agreement. The need for the construction of the proposed railways as a block to extensions of the Bagdad Railway in Persia is indeed no longer so urgent, in view of the altered prospects of that railway, due to the recent revolution in Turkey, but there is always the chance of a competitor coming forward with railway projects for the neutral zone, to take effect on the expiry of the Russian Railway Agreement in 1910, and it

would be well that we should approach the Persian Government as soon as possible, it or no other reason, to forestall other possible applicants for concessions, a step which need not necessarily involve the immediate commencement of construction work.

I observe that the Russian Government regard the moment as favourable owing to the lull in German activity due to recent events in Turkey. To this I think may be added another reason for considering the present moment to be opportune. Obscure as is the political outlook in Persia to-day, it may yet be predicted with confidence that if she is left to herself, the trend will be towards a really constitutional régime, and with the anti-foreign, and especially anti-Anglo-Russian, attitude of the late Medjliss fresh in our memory, it is much to be hoped that the concession will be obtained before a really popular Assembly is re-established.

Viewed from the purely Persian point of view, the early construction of railways is highly desirable; their existence would put a powerful weapon in the hands of the Central Government for the pacification of, and the consolidation of their authority in, regions where that authority is to-day a mere shadow and can be set at nought with impunity. Nor would the Persian Government alone benefit by railways, for their construction and maintenance would give employment to numbers of the inhabitants, while the development which may reasonably be expected of the resources, particularly agricultural, of the district traversed by the line could not fail to contribute to the prosperity of the population, and should tend to the establishment of a better equilibrium between imports and exports, and thereby to a commercial stability which could not but react favourably on the general condition of the country. It is in consideration of the great importance attached by His Majesty's and the Russian Governments to the existence in Persia of political tranquillity and commercial security, to both of which railway construction would materially contribute, that I have laid stress on this latter aspect of the question. Its consideration, however, gives rise to the reflection as to the effect likely to be produced by the passage of a railway through his territory on the position of the Sheikh of Mohammerah, in view of the special relations existing between him and His Majesty's Government, and I submit that the opinion of His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire would be a valuable one on this point, as well as in regard to the general effect of the proposed railway on British interests south of the Russian zone.

I notice that the Russian Government consider that the question of a large external loan to Persia should be considered simultaneously with that of the proposed railway. Mr. Marling has dealt so fully with this passage in the *aide-mémoire* that I need say no more than that M. Bizot, when I saw him a day or two ago, was as far as ever from feeling in a position to apply for even the proposed joint advance of 400,000*l.*

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[40838]

No. 233.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 289.)

Sir,

*Tehran, November 4, 1908.*

IN continuation of Mr. Marling's despatches Nos. 214 and 246 of the 13th August and 8th September respectively, I have the honour to forward copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Resident in the Persian Gulf to the Indian Government on the subject of the opening up of communications from Ahwaz northward. Major Cox suggests that, if the policy of His Majesty's Government permits it, no time should be lost in insisting on the Persian Government taking the necessary steps to enable a strong reconnoitring party to examine in safety the disturbed country below Dizful and Khorremabad, an expedition of this kind being a necessary preliminary to the opening up of this lawless district, whether by road or railway.

In view of the Persian railway scheme, which now forms the subject of *pourparlers* between His Majesty's Government and the Russian Government, the Persian Transport Company, concessionnaires for the road from Ahwaz to Tehran, could hardly be urged to incur the expense of survey work in Luristan, and the cost of the expedition would thus fall on Imperial funds. His Majesty's Government may not be prepared to incur this expense in this early stage of the railway negotiations, but if the proposed railway is ever to be built, we shall sooner or later have to insist on facilities for an expedition of the kind suggested by Major Cox, and it is well to remember that the situation of the Persian Transport Company, as holders of the Concession, which they have hitherto



been unable to prosecute owing to the neglect of the Persian Government to maintain order in Luristan, affords us sufficient justification for demanding these facilities at any moment.

If an agreement is reached between His Majesty's Government and the Russian Government on the subject of the proposed Julfa-Mohammerah Railway, the arrangement will, I presume, contain engagements as regards the rate of construction of the sections respectively in the Russian sphere and the neutral zone. In default of this, the necessity is obvious for grappling with the difficulties of railway construction in Luristan at as early a date as possible. It would, of course, greatly injure our commercial interests if, for instance, Hamadan were connected by rail with Julfa, while the Mohammerah section was still *en l'air* at Dizful.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 233.

*Major Cox to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 10.)

Sir,

Shiraz, October 8, 1908.

IN continuation of previous correspondence, I have the honour to forward a copy of a letter which I have addressed to the Government of India on the subject of the opening up of communications from Ahwaz northwards.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) P. Z. COX, Major, Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and His Majesty's Consul-General for Fars, Khuzistan, &c.

Inclosure 2 in No. 233.

*Major Cox to Government of India.*

Sir,

Shiraz, October 8, 1908.

IN amplification of my telegram dated the 5th October, 1908, on the subject of the opening up of communications northward from Ahwaz, I have the honour to refer to the communications marginally cited which have reached me since the submission of my letter dated the 29th March, 1908.\*

2. Before Captain Haworth was able to place me in possession of the further observations to which prospective allusion was made in my letter just quoted, he and Captain Lorimer happened to find themselves together at His Majesty's Legation, and I then suggested to them that, with the cognizance and concurrence of His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, they should endeavour to embody their final views in a joint report for the information of the Government of India.

For reasons which they explain, however, they have recorded their views separately in the communications above cited. Mr. Marling has also, in the despatch of which I have just received a copy, expressed his views on the subject to His Majesty's Government.

I think we are all agreed that the more circuitous route via Kermanshah, which it was proposed to fall back upon in view of the continued impassibility of Luristan, must, by the light of recent developments, be relegated to the background, and that our efforts must be redirected to those more direct arteries of connection between Ahwaz and Hamadan which pass through Luristan. From this point there is some divergence of opinion. Captain Haworth believes that if our two Consular Representatives concerned push the matter locally from the north and south respectively, while His Majesty's Legation endeavours to keep the Central Government up to worrying its local officers, some means of advance towards the desired goal will open out before us. Captain

\* Captain Haworth, No. 1 (Telegraphic), August 6; ditto, No. 2 (Telegraphic), August 10; Memorandum by Lieutenant Lorimer, August 3; Mr. Marling, No. 214, August 13; Mr. O'Beirne, July 28, 1908.

Lorimer, on the other hand, in view of past experience, is altogether sceptical of our chances of success in this direction except in so far as the efforts of our own officers can assist in keeping the local Persian officials up to giving effect to orders received from Tehran at the instance of His Majesty's Legation.

I am bound to say that, having regard to the entire failure of the Sardar Mukarram, of whom great hopes were entertained, to cope with the Dirakwand difficulty, and to introduce any measure of order into Luristan, I am inclined to agree with Captain Lorimer.

Whether the country between Dizful and Khoremad is to be discussed as the tract most probably containing the best alignment for a railway, or whether for a reasonably easy caravan route, the primary problem is the same; no practical advance with either project can be made until the representatives of the concessionnaires, or of Government on their behalf, are placed in a position to move about the country and examine the alternative alignments in security. I am very much afraid that in leaving the achievement of this primary *sine quâ non* to local effort we shall only be wasting valuable time, and shall still be driven to the other alternative in the end.

I submit that the great commercial and political interests involved to Great Britain in the opening of an expeditious channel for the passage of our sea-borne merchandise from the head of the Gulf northwards indicates, daily more urgently, the need for His Majesty's Government to pursue the subject to a definite and speedy issue with the Government of the Shah.

The nature of the diplomatic measures which must be adopted to bring the matter to a head it is beyond my province to suggest; moreover, the question will probably turn on the precise state of the negotiations understood to be in progress for the acquisition of a Railway Concession, or on the measures, if any, on foot for the grant of a loan to the Persian Government, on neither of which questions have I recent knowledge.

But, supposing for a moment that neither of the above matters are in a sufficiently lively state of progress to affect the question of Messrs. Lynch's Road Concessions, the considerations—

1. That the British concessionnaires are simply prevented from prosecuting their Concession by the neglect of the Persian Government to introduce the slightest measure of order and security into Luristan;
2. That their Concession is in a fair way of lapsing through no fault of their own;
3. That apart from Messrs. Lynch, it is a strong national commercial interest of Great Britain that this route should be opened up without further delay;

undoubtedly give us ample grounds, if the policy of His Majesty's Government permits it, to insist on the Persian Government taking measures either of inducement or compulsion, to make it possible and safe for the concessionnaires or ourselves to send a strong reconnoitring party through the country accompanied by an adequate personal guard of Indian sowars, for the purpose of examining the present tract, and, if necessary, selecting another alignment.

At the present moment Captain Lorimer, after consulting with His Majesty's Minister and myself, is just starting from Ispahan for Hamadan, Kermanshah, and Pusht-i-Kuh, the Wali having undertaken to pilot him through to Dizful.

Captain Haworth is meanwhile studying the question from the north, and will probably join Captain Lorimer at some point in his course.

Should His Majesty's Government decide it to be expedient to press the Persian Government on the lines advocated by Captain Lorimer and myself, we shall by that time have the benefit of the opinion of the latter officer and Captain Haworth, on completion of their tours, as to the precise measures which are needed at the present time to make it possible for a survey party to pass through.

I am forwarding a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Minister.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) P. Z. COX, Major,  
Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.



[40839]

No. 234.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 290.)

Sir,

Tehran, November 4, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 146 of the 22nd August last, transmitting draft of the King's Regulations which it is proposed to issue regarding the ownership of landed property in Gulahek.

I have carefully examined the Articles of these Regulations, and they have been informally discussed with the more important land-owners of Gulahek. It is evident that these Regulations would give us wider powers than we have hitherto exercised, and their issue, with the existence of a National Assembly, would be attended with serious difficulties. I agree with you, however, in thinking that the suppression, for the time being at any rate, of the nationalist spirit in Tehran affords a favourable opportunity for the issue of these Regulations. I venture, however, to submit the following modifications, which I think are essential, even under the present despotic régime, to avoid arousing the susceptibilities of the Persian Government, and to obviate difficulties in the execution of these Regulations:—

*Article 1.*—Add at the end of the Article:

“However, mortgages transacted between the villagers of Gulahek are exempt from the above conditions, but the Minister must be notified of the foreclosure of any such mortgage.”

Mortgages between villagers, or even between members of the same family, are of frequent occurrence in Gulahek, and it would be a needless and vexatious waste of time, both for the villagers and the Legation, if these petty transactions had to be accompanied by the formalities indicated in Article 1.

*Article 3.*—Modify as follows:—

“(1.) Every person applying to the Minister for his approval of any transaction within Article 1 of these Regulations shall forward to him the written document referred to in Article 2.

“(2.) If the Minister approves the transaction, he shall indorse a note to that effect on the original document and return the same to the applicant. If the Minister consider it necessary, a copy shall be retained and filed in the archives of the Legation.

“(3.) If the Minister does not approve the transaction, he shall inform the applicant, and return the original document without indorsement.”

The modifications of this Article are suggested with a view to economy of labour in registration, filing of documents, &c., and curtailment of useless formalities. The system which the Article as modified above would bring into force is practically the same as that which has been adopted by the Russian Legation in Zerguendeh, and which has, I understand, proved most satisfactory.

I would suggest that Article 6 be omitted altogether. It would be almost impossible to put it into execution, and any attempt to do so would bring the Legation into conflict with the religious law, which, as in all Mussulman countries, is the only authority recognized in matters of succession, even by the civil Government. In its stead an additional Article might be substituted, to the effect that no one save British and Persian subjects has the right to own landed property in Gulahek.

I think that the Regulations, with the above modifications, might be issued without serious inconvenience, and would be of great advantage as strengthening the hands of His Majesty's Legation in cases similar to that of the Vartini Garden. At the same time I think it would be inadvisable to give any undue publicity to the Regulations, and I would propose to do no more than display one copy of them in the Vice-Consulate, and to supply the Katkhoda with another, which he would be instructed to retain in his possession.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY

Inclosure in No. 234.

*Draft of King's Regulations.*

PERSIA.

Notice.

THE following Regulations made by His Majesty's Minister and Consul-General, and allowed by the Secretary of State, are published for general information.

(Signed)

*His Britannic Majesty's Minister and Consul-General.*

Tehran, , 1908.

*King's Regulations under Article 3 of "The Persia (Regulations) Order in Council, 1901."*

No. of 1908.

*Gulahek Land.*

Whereas the village of Gulahek is subject to the jurisdiction of His Britannic Majesty's Minister; and

Whereas it is desirable to make further and better provision with regard to landed property in the said village of Gulahek, it is therefore enacted as follows:—

1. No person owning or occupying landed property within the limits of Gulahek shall sell, mortgage, transfer, or give the same or any part thereof, or let or sublet or allow the same or any part thereof, to be occupied by any other person without the approval of the Minister. However, mortgages transacted between the villagers of Gulahek are exempt from the above conditions, but the Minister must be notified of the foreclosure of any such mortgage.

2. Every conveyance, lease, mortgage, assignment, gift or agreement, involving a change of ownership or possession of any landed property in Gulahek shall be in writing.

3.—(1.) Every person applying to the Minister for his approval of any transaction within Article 1 of these Regulations shall forward to him the written document referred to in Article 2.

(2.) If the Minister approve the transaction he shall indorse a note to that effect on the original document, and return the same to the applicant. If the Minister consider it necessary a copy shall be retained and filed in the archives of the Legation.

(3.) If the Minister does not approve the transaction he shall inform the applicant and return the original document without indorsement.

4. No document of title to landed property in Gulahek bearing date after these Regulations have come into force, other than a will, shall be received in evidence in civil proceedings in any British Court unless the approval of the Minister has been indorsed upon it.

5.—(1.) Any person owning or occupying landed property in Gulahek may, if the Minister think fit, be called upon by him to prove that he owns or is in occupation of the said property with the approval of the Minister.

(2.) If any such person when so called upon refuses to disclose his title to the said property, he may be summoned before the British Court exercising jurisdiction over Gulahek, and, unless it is proved that the said person owns or is in occupation of the said property with the approval of the Minister, the Court may declare the said person's interest forfeited to His Britannic Majesty, and it shall thereupon vest in the Minister.



(3.) If any such person, when so called upon, discloses his title, but fails to prove that he owns or is in occupation of the said property with the approval of the Minister, the Minister may either declare his approval or make an order for the purchase of such person's interest in the property, or make such other order as may seem desirable.

(4.) If the Minister makes an order for the purchase of such person's interest in the property, the price shall be fixed:—

(a.) If the ownership or occupation in question commenced before the coming into force of these Regulations, by arbitration.

(b.) If the ownership or occupation commenced after the coming into force of these Regulations, by the Minister.

6. Any order made by the Minister under these Regulations may be enforced by proceedings in the British Court exercising jurisdiction over Gulahek.

7. If any question arises whether any particular property is or is not within the limits of Gulahek it shall be referred to the Minister, whose decision shall be final.

8. The Minister may issue instructions as to the mode of filing copies of written documents in accordance with Article 3, and generally as to the maintenance of a register of the owners and occupiers of landed property in Gulahek.

9. In these Regulations "Minister" means His Britannic Majesty's Minister and Consul-General, and includes any Chargé d'Affaires or person acting, with the approval of the Secretary of State, for such Minister and Consul-General; and "landed property" includes every building, structure, or part thereof, whether the same be used for habitation, business, or pleasure, and all gardens, fields, vineyards, or other plots of land, whether appurtenant to a building or structure or not.

10. These Regulations may be cited as "The Gulahek Land Regulations," and shall come into force on a day to be declared by the Minister.

(Signed)

*His Britannic Majesty's Minister and Consul-General.*

Tehran, 1908.

Allowed:  
(Signed) E. GREY.

[40841]

No. 235.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 293.)

Sir,

*Tehran, November 5, 1908.*

MR. MARLING duly received your telegram No. 275 of the 29th September respecting the transfer of the Imperial Bank's lien from the Kermanshah customs receipts to those of Bushire. Since then the Bank has been endeavouring by negotiations with M. Mornard to obtain the Persian Government's acceptance of the proposed arrangement, but M. Mornard has now informed Mr. A. O. Wood, the Chief Manager, that the Minister of Finance finds it impossible for the moment to comply with the Bank's demand.

Mr. Wood called upon me the evening before last to inform me of the breakdown of his negotiations, and to invoke the support of His Majesty's Legation, and I now have the honour to transmit a copy of the note which I have addressed to the Persian Government in compliance with Mr. Wood's request.

Mr. Wood tells me that the amount due half-yearly on these advances (exclusive of the Anglo-Indian loan of 1903-4) is some 175,000 tomans (35,000*l.*). For this the Bushire customs receipts should easily suffice in normal years, but, owing to the disturbed state of the country, they at present amount to no more than 4,000 tomans a-week (800*l.*), or 208,000 tomans (41,300*l.*) a-year.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 235.

*Sir G. Barclay to Ala-es-Sultaneh.*

Your Highness,

*Tehran, November 4, 1908.*

IT is in pursuance of instructions from His Majesty's Government that I have the honour to address your Highness on the following matter:—

The proceeds of the custom-house at Kermanshah have, as your Highness is probably aware, been until lately employed to meet the interest on the advances made to the Persian Government by the Imperial Bank of Persia. These are now no longer available for this purpose, and in these circumstances it is my duty to request your Highness to be so good as to cause the necessary steps to be taken, in order that the receipts of the customs-house at Bushire may be set apart to meet the interest on the various advances by an arrangement similar to that until lately in force at Kermanshah, by which sufficient funds were retained each month by the Bank to meet the interest accruing.

It will of course be necessary to make further provision for the payment of the interest in question should the receipts of the Bushire customs-house not suffice for the purpose.

I avail, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[40842]

No. 236.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 294. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Tehran, November 5, 1908.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 268 of the 2nd ultimo, I have the honour to report that during the first week of October the relations between the Governor-General of Tabreez and the Nationalist party showed no signs of improving, and the various attempts which were made to arrive at a solution of the difficulties of the situation were unavailing. It was, moreover, clear that Ain-ed-Dowleh had little intention of seeking by timely concession to conciliate the Nationalist party, and, moreover, by closing the gates of the city and allowing none of the necessities of life to be brought into the town, he, while producing great distress amongst the people, aroused the indignation of all classes of the population.

On the 9th a simultaneous attack was made by the Nationalists on the Governor-General's camp and on the Maku cavalry, who were holding the Aji Bridge near one of the gates of the town. The fight, which continued for some ten hours, resulted in a complete Nationalist victory, the Maku cavalry being routed and the Royalist camp thrown into great confusion. In the course of this fight the Russian telephone station near the Aji Bridge was the scene of much bloodshed, and about forty Maku Kurds were there killed. The Russian Manager of the Tabreez-Julfa road, according to M. de Hartwig, barely escaped with his life, and was saved by one of Sattar Khan's men.

On the 12th the Davachi quarter of the town, which until then had been in the hands of the Royalists, surrendered, and the leading Mujtehed and Shuja Nizam, the leader of the Marand cavalry, together with all the Royalists, fled. Their houses and the celebrated Anjuman Islamieh, the head-quarters of the reactionaries, were looted and burnt. From this time the city has been in the undisputed possession of the Nationalists. The Royalist troops under Ain-ed-Dowleh were removed to some 15 miles from Tabreez. Ain-ed-Dowleh was dismissed and Ferman Ferma appointed to succeed him, but, on the latter's refusal to take up office, Ain-ed-Dowleh has since been reinstated.

By the 18th October the Russian Government had decided to send in 80 or 100 Cossacks and two companies of infantry, but eventually were persuaded to abandon their intention.

Since the victory of the Nationalist party the situation in Tabreez has on the whole improved, and the bazaars were reopened on the 28th October, but the trade of the town continued to suffer considerably owing to the action of Shuja Nizam, who, after



his flight, returned to Marand and held up the Julfa road until, on the 28th, a bomb was sent to him by post which killed both him and one of his sons. Since his death traffic on the road has been much hindered by a surviving son, who has proclaimed himself Governor of Marand, and the road to Erzeroum has also been very unsafe owing to the presence of brigands from Maku.

I should add that since the final defeat of the Royalists the Nationalist leaders have addressed telegrams to the Shah and the Minister for Foreign Affairs expressing their loyalty to His Majesty and announcing to His Highness their intention to do all in their power to protect the interests of foreigners in the town. Copies of these telegrams were sent to most of the foreign Missions in Tehran.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[40843]

No. 237.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 295. Secret.)

Sir,

Tehran, November 6, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith diaries of the Military Attaché to His Majesty's Consulate-General at Meshed, Nos. 40, 41, and 42.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

#### Inclosure 1 in No. 237.

No. 40.—*Diary of Military Attaché, Meshed, for week ending October 3, 1908.*

#### Summary of News.

(Secret.)

TASHKENT reports the arrival of 1,000 recruits by Orenburg Railway; 600 of these are for the regiments of Orenburg Cossacks, the remaining 400 are artillerymen.

A garrison report from Tashkent shows this garrison to be normal.

2. Tashkent reports that the daily mortality from cholera in Tashkent city is from 50 to 60, and from 250 to 300 in the whole district, including the city. These figures may seem high, especially for the district, and it is possible that our correspondent has included deaths from other causes than cholera; but Tashkent is a city of 150,000 inhabitants, and probably many more deaths occur than are indicated by the cases in the cholera hospital.

3. The Termez troops have all marched towards Kilif, for manoeuvres, leaving behind them what seems a record small number of troops to hold Termez during their absence.

4. The fact of Termez being left almost without troops shows that the Afghan frontier is quieting down after the excitement caused by the Jamshedi episode. Most of the Jamshedis have now returned to Afghanistan, and a small party of "irreconcilables" has gone to Samarkand. According to our correspondents, this Jamshedi affair has made the Russians decide to increase the number of Cossacks on the Kushk frontier; the establishment of Cossacks in future to consist of 200 at Kushk and 200 at Penjdeh.

5. For the last few weeks our Kizil Arvat correspondent has been prophesying outrage and disaster on account of the wholesale discharges and reductions of pay among the civilian railway mechanics and workmen. It would seem as if he were right; this week we have news of five serious railway accidents involving considerable loss of life and great pecuniary loss to the railway. Our Charjui agent has a story of a damaged Amu Darya bridge pier, which looks as if an attempt had been made to wreck the bridge.

The Turkestan railways have been very free from accidents lately, and this sudden outcrop points clearly to the organized revenge of discontented mechanics.

#### "Transcaspian Review."

September 15.—On the 11th September a mail train ran off the line near Kaufmanski Station; the mails were delayed seven hours by this accident.

On the 10th September there was a collision on the Kushk line.

September 16.—The Tashkent, Syr Darya, Samarkand, and Ferghana districts are officially declared to be infected with cholera.

September 17.—On the 15th September the mail train ran off the line between Katta Kurghan and Nagornaya. All the carriages of the train were wrecked.

September 18.—As cholera has appeared in Transcaspia, imports and exports of articles capable of carrying infection are forbidden.

September 19.—The Firyuza Railway will be closed from the 3rd October.

On the 18th September eighty-three men of the 4th Company of the 2nd Railway Battalion left Firyuza by train for Askabad to convoy back some rifles; 7 versts out from Firyuza the brake broke; the train then ran away and was violently derailed; seventy-four of the soldiers were injured and were conveyed to Ak Tepe Hospital. A train came from Bezmen to remove the injured.

(Later news) of the injured in the above accident: one is dead, twelve are dying, and twenty-one are dangerously injured.

On the 13th September a passenger train was derailed on the Tashkent Railway between the stations of Darbaza and Keles; nineteen passengers were injured, and the train was much damaged.

September 22.—On account of cholera, the Artik and Chacha routes from Russian territory to Persia have been closed.

September 23.—From the 7th to the 13th November the reservists of the 2nd Turkestan Reserve Brigade will parade daily at 8 A.M.

#### "Turkestan News."

September 16.—On the 15th September there were in Tashkent hospital twenty-three cases of cholera. The average mortality is 40 per cent.

On the 17th September Prince Khilkov arrived in Tashkent by the Tashkent Railway, and went on to Ferghana the same day.

On the 19th September there were twenty-seven cases of cholera in Tashkent hospital.

#### Kizil Arvat Report (for Krasnovodsk).

September 3.—One hundred recruits passed through E.

September 6.—Fifty Russian "mujiks" passed through E. en route for Band-i-Sultan and Penjdeh.

September 13.—Twenty Russians were discharged from the railway workshops.

September 14.—Fifteen Taman Cossacks and ten Turkomans left for the Persian frontier.

September 17.—The Chief of (this section of) the Railway arrived from Krasnovodsk to go into the claims of 400 Russian workmen who have been discharged from the workshops here. The workshops have been closed. A certain number of workmen have been given the option of remaining on at a reduced rate of pay; some have accepted this, others have refused. There is much discontent among the workmen, and outrages are expected.

Troops at Kizil Arvat:—

300 men Geok Tepe Reserve Battalion.

100 Taman Cossacks.

30 Frontier Guard.

50 men (1st) Railway Battalion.

#### Sarakhs Report.

September 19-24.—The troops parade every day, the scouts working with the machine-guns, sometimes on foot, sometimes mounted.

Strength of the Garrison:—

5th Transcaspian Battalion, 900 strong, including scouts and machine-gun party.

50 Kavkaz Cossacks.

50 Frontier Guard.



*Merv Report.*

September 18.—Forty Transcaspian Sappers, with entrenching tools, left by Kushk train.

September 19.—Thirty trucks full of sleepers came in from W. and were sent on to the Kushk branch.

September 21.—A large number of the Jamshedis have gone back to Afghanistan. On the 18th instant fourteen Jamshedis, of good position, fully armed, accompanied by a Turk (Tartar) interpreter, came in from Kushk. They left for Samarkand on the 21st September.

*Merv-Kushk Report.*

September 15.—Two hundred men of the 2nd Turkestan Pioneer Battalion (he must mean the Transcaspian Sapper Battalion) left Merv by Kushk train. These men had lately come from Tashkent.

September 16.—One hundred and fifty Taman Cossacks left Merv for Kushk. It is said that the Russians intend to increase the number of Cossacks on the Afghan frontier, and that in future there will be 200 at Kushk and 200 at Penjeh.

September 17.—A party of influential Jamshedis came in to Merv by Kushk train. They were most carefully guarded *en route* to prevent any Afghans attacking them, and all Afghans seen near the train were seized and searched (for arms).

There is a regular panic at Kushk now on the subject of Afghan assassins, all Afghans seen being carefully searched, and arrested if their passports are not in perfect order. The Kushk defences have been specially strengthened to prevent people climbing in at night, walls being heightened, barbed wire fences made, &c.

The work at Band-i-Sultan is being carried on energetically.

The "band" (dam) is nearly finished, and the canal is being pushed on rapidly. A regular bridge is being built over the river. Five hundred men are engaged on all this work.

*Charjui Report.*

September 18.—Two hundred Transcaspian infantry passed E. by rail.

September 19.—One of the piers of the Amu Darya bridge has been damaged and is in a dangerous state; 400 men are working on it now.

September 20.—Three hundred Turkestan infantry passed E. by rail.

*Termez Report.*

September 19.—Two steamers have come in during the past week. These steamers brought 6,000 poods weight of ordnance stores; a large proportion of this consisted of gun and rifle ammunition. They also brought 2,000 poods of rice.

Muhammad Sarwar Khan, formerly "Naib" (Assistant) of the Governor of Mazar-i-Sharif, who fled into Russian territory about nine months ago, has just returned to Afghanistan with his followers.

All the garrison, including the fortress artillerymen with a number of heavy guns, marched for Kilif on the 18th September, only leaving small detachments behind as line guards.

The only complete corps, which did not march, is the pontoon company; this remains in Termez, engaged in its usual duties.

*Samarkand Report.*

September 15.—Twenty-four boxes of rifles came in by rail from Tashkent.

September 18.—The Governor-General is expected here shortly from Tashkent to inspect the garrison; preparations are being made for his reception.

All the troops, including the two batteries, have just returned from a week's training in the hills.

*Tashkent Report.*

September 9.—Four hundred men for the 4th (Orenburg) Cossacks came in by the T. O. Railway.

September 11.—Two hundred men for the 6th (Orenburg) Cossacks came in by the T. O. Railway.

September 15.—Four hundred artillerymen, with some horses, came in by the T. O. Railway.

There has been cholera here for some time—nearly a month. The cholera came to Tashkent by the T. O. Railway. There was cholera in the villages all round Tashkent long before the disease was recognized in the city. Many people suffering from cholera have been taken out of the train on its arrival from Orenburg. Only a small proportion of the cases which occur in the city find their way to the cholera hospital. Latterly the daily mortality from cholera has been about 50 to 60 in Tashkent, and from 250 to 300 a day in the whole district (including the city).

*Garrison of Tashkent:—*

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Rifle Battalions, about 1,000 strong each, with ninety horses and four machine guns.

Khojent and Tashkent Reserve Battalions, about 800 men each; no horses or machine guns. I did not see any two-wheeled transport carts, but each of these six battalions had five large fourgons for transport.

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Q.F. Field Batteries (the 3rd and 4th do not belong to Tashkent, but they were there for training this summer).

Besides the field batteries there are the artillery park and fortress artillery, who have a total of about 800 men.

Orenburg Cossack Regiment, about 800 strong.

One hundred Lesghian Cossacks, employed on police duty in the town.

Two hundred men of the Intendance.

Four hundred Mounted Frontier Guard.

There are three magazines (stores as well as magazines in our sense), one in the fort, one in the artillery lines, one in the infantry lines. A guard of 100 men is always posted on each of these magazines.

Over 2,000 men are employed in the T. O. and C. A. Railway workshops.

(Signed) H. SMYTH, Captain,  
Military Attaché.

Meshed, October 3, 1908.

*Inclosure 2 in No. 237.*

No. 41.—*Diary of Military Attaché, Meshed, for week ending October 10, 1908.*

*Summary of News.*

(Secret.)

A GARRISON report from Merv shows the garrison to be rather under normal strength; but the deficiencies seem due to local causes, *e.g.*, a number of sappers are working at Sultan Band, and some troops have gone off to the east to try to put down one of the numerous bands of brigands who have infested the Merv district for a long time.

2. Merv reports the arrival from Askabad direction of a medical corps 120 strong. This is probably the same corps reported by Askabad (Diary No. 36) as having been sent towards Krasnovodsk at the time when cholera was expected via that port. Now that the disease is approaching from the other direction, the medical corps may have been recalled to the threatened side.

3. There is cholera at Khiva, and at Charjui too, I hear; but the disease is not increasing in virulence or spreading in such a way as to cause general alarm.

4. The Russians are taking various steps to prevent their Jamshedi immigrants from giving more trouble. The Jamshedis are not being allowed to form one large settlement, but are being scattered about in different locations; more important still, their turbulent Chief, Said Ahmad Beg, has been removed to Samarkand.

*"Transcaspian Review."*

September 25.—This year the Imperial lands in Turkestan produced 85,000 poods of bread from 8,510 dessateens of land under wheat cultivation.

Lieutenant-Colonel Kozlyanov has been appointed to the command of the Kushk Railway Company.



A truck laden with stone was upset at Kermene and dragged along in such a way that 450 sages of the track (sleepers, &c.) were torn up.

Lieutenant-General Pokotilo has retired from the Semirechia command.

September 29.—The Governor-General of Turkestan comes to Transcaspia on the 2nd October; he is expected at Askabad on the 6th October.

From the 28th August to the 23rd September 118 cases of cholera were admitted to Tashkent Hospital; of these, 12 died.

There is cholera at Fort Alexandrovsk.

A large underground store of bombs, explosives, arms, and ammunition has been found by the police at Tiflis.

#### *Krasnovodsk Report.*

September 19.—Six Kavkaz Cossacks came in from E. and left for Baku.

Seven trucks full of sleepers sent off E.

September 21.—Twenty men of the Frontier Guard left E.

September 22-24.—Seven trucks of rails and ten trucks of sleepers sent E.

On account of the cholera in Russia, all steamers arriving are boarded by the health officers at some distance from the shore, and are only allowed to come in after a close inspection.

There is a general idea that the continued fighting in Tabreez will sooner or later compel the Russians to interfere. All the small frontier garrisons, both on the Caucasus and Chikishlyar frontier, are being accordingly kept at much above their normal strength.

Garrison of Krasnovodsk:—

200 men Krasnovodsk Reserve Battalion.

100 men 1st Railway Battalion.

50 Cossacks.

30 Frontier Guard.

#### *Sarakhs Report.*

September 30.—The training of the troops proceeds as usual every day.

The four machine-guns, with the Cossacks and mounted infantry, go off together away from the other troops.

#### *Merv Report.*

September 22.—Two hundred men of the 7th Transcaspian Battalion left E.; they had their arms and accoutrements (*i.e.*, they were not time-expired).

One hundred men of the 5th Transcaspian Battalion came in from W.

September 23.—One hundred men of the Kushk (Reserve) Battalion came in from Kushk and left by rail W.

Fifty Kavkaz Cossacks went out after some robbers who have been terrorizing the country to the east of Merv.

September 25.—One hundred Kavkaz Cossacks left by rail E. (The fifty Cossacks mentioned above left by road, so these others might be a reinforcement.)

Twenty trucks full of sleepers and rails came in from W.; these were sent through to Kushk branch next day.

September 26.—Thirty Kavkaz Cossacks left by Kushk train.

September 27.—A medical corps, 120 strong, came in from W.

Forty boxes rifle ammunition came in from W.

Garrison of Merv:—

6th Transcaspian Battalion, 800 strong.

7th " " 500 strong.

Merv Reserve Battalion, 500 strong.

Transcaspian Sapper Battalion, 200 strong.

Artillerymen 2nd Brigade, 400 strong.

Kavkaz Cossack Regiment, 400 strong (presumably this includes the 150 detached locally).

Intendance, 100.

Medical Corps, 120.

#### *Merv-Kushk Report.*

September 28.—Saïd Ahmad Beg, the Chief of the Jamshedis, has left Merv by rail en route for Sarmarkand.

About half the original number of Jamshedis have gone back to Afghanistan. Those who remain are being allotted land in different places; some of them are being settled near the station of Sari-Yasi.

Sixty two-wheeled transport carts have been sent from Merv to Sultan Band.

#### *Charjui Report.*

September 24.—Boxes said to contain 600 rifles came in from E.

(Signed) H. SMYTH, Captain,  
Military Attaché.

Meshed, October 10, 1908.

Inclosure 3 in No. 237.

No. 42.—*Diary of Military Attaché, Meshed, for week ending October 17, 1908.*

#### *Summary of News.*

(Secret.)

GENERAL MISHCHENKO, Governor-General of Turkestan, has been shot at and wounded during manœuvres at Askabad. On the 5th October he was watching a blank cartridge attack on the Gaodan (south) side of Askabad, when four sappers, who had provided themselves with ball ammunition, opened fire on him. The whistling of bullets attracted the attention of the staff, and the attack was stopped, but not before one of the bullets had struck the Governor-General in the thigh. His Adjutant (? A.D.C.) was wounded too.

The four sappers were immediately arrested with ball cartridge and fired ball cases in their possession.

General Mishchenko mounted his horse (he was sitting in an easy chair when he was shot), so the wound could not have been very serious; but there was considerable hæmorrhage, and he was removed to his special railway carriage (at the Askabad station) and attended to there.

2. Following on last week's Merv report of the movement of troops against bands of robbers who were terrorizing the district, Sarakhs now reports that a party of sixty of these same robbers has looted ten Russian fourgons carrying Russian trade goods from Tejen to Sarakhs. One hundred Turkoman sowars from Sarakhs were sent after these robbers, and troops from Merv were summoned to cut them off, as they were reported to be retiring towards Merv. This information was evidently a blind, as the band was next heard of near Kahka, so the Merv-Sarakhs combined operations were a failure.

3. Merv reports movements of various parties of troops, but they seem to be mostly connected with operations against robbers. The Merv and Kahka batteries have returned to their stations. There is some cholera at Merv, but it does not seem serious.

#### *"Transcaspian Review."*

October 1.—General Mishchenko is due to arrive at Charjui on the 1st October, Merv on the 1st October, Tejen on the 2nd October, Kahka on the 2nd October, Askabad on the 2nd October.

During the manœuvres a military train ran off the line at Kokand; this interrupted the line for three hours.

October 2.—The Governor-General arrived at Askabad to-day.

There is cholera at Mangishlak.

October 4.—The Governor-General went to Firyuza on the 3rd October; on the 4th and 5th October he will be present at manœuvres on the Gaodan side.

October 6.—A disastrous occurrence marked the close of the Askabad manœuvres; General Mishchenko was wounded by a rifle bullet. The General was sitting in an



easy chair watching the progress of the attack, his Adjutant, Khorunji Zabievorot, being in attendance on him. Suddenly bullets began to whistle past them, and the General was hit in the thigh by a bullet evidently fired by a soldier instead of the blank he should have been firing. The Adjutant was hit in the leg at the same time. The General got on his horse and rode to his special railway carriage, the blood running all over the saddle on the way. On arrival at his carriage he was attended by doctors from the hospital.

Three hundred and twenty thousand roubles have disappeared from the mail train between Tashkent and Charjui: two postal officials are under arrest.

October 7.—General Mishchenko left Askabad on the 7th October. He is due at Merv on the 7th, Kushk on the 8th; leaves Kushk on the 9th, Bairam Ali on the 10th, Charjui on the 12th, Samarkand on the 13th.

#### Krasnovodsk Report.

The following time-expired men have passed through *en route* for Russia:—

September 26.—Twenty men of the Merv Reserve Battalion.

September 29.—Fifty artillerymen.

October 2.—Ten men of the Kushk corps.

The following railway material has been sent E.:—

September 25.—Six trucks of rails and fourteen trucks of sleepers.

September 29.—Seven trucks of rails.

September 30.—Three trucks of rails and fifteen trucks of sleepers.

October 2.—One truck of rails and fifteen trucks of sleepers.

September 30.—Twenty men of the 1st Railway Battalion left E.

October 2.—The railway workmen here were paid to-day; there were 150 of them.

#### Askabad Report.

September 30.—The two Kahka batteries have returned to Kahka by road from Askabad. The following is a description of these batteries:—

(a.) Kubanski Cossack horse battery of 6 Q.F. guns; guns fire a projectile weighing 20 garwankas (Russian pounds). About 200 Cossack artillerymen and 200 horses; these horses are not the property of the Russian Government.

(b.) Mortar battery of 6 heavy guns; guns fire a projectile weighing 70 garwankas; 250 Russian (*i.e.*, not Cossacks or any other irregulars) artillerymen to this battery.

Each of the infantry battalions in Askabad has 80 horses and 4 machine guns. Only the reserve battalion has no horses; but now orders have been issued that the reserve battalion too is to receive 80 horses.

#### Sarakhs Report.

October 2.—Ten waggons belonging to some Sarakhs mujiks have been attacked and plundered by a band of sixty Turkoman robbers between Tejen and Sarakhs. These waggons were carrying goods for Sarakhs traders. Mangli Khan, with 100 Turkoman sowars, has started out after these robbers.

Twenty of this same gang have lately been openly holding up people on the Merv-Sarakhs road.

This same band has committed several daring robberies lately near Merv itself, in open defiance of the Russian authorities. Troops from Merv have several times gone out against them without any success.

October 5.—Mangli Khan's party returned, having failed to come up with the robbers. A party of 100 Cossacks, supported by some infantry, came from Merv to help them to cut off the band; but these were not any more successful.

October 6.—News has been received to the effect that the band of sixty robbers has been seen near Kahka.

Twenty-five time-expired Cossacks came in from Karez. They have been relieved by a fresh party.

#### Merv-Kushk Report.

September 29.—About 200 Transcaspian infantry came in by rail from W.

September 30.—Two hundred of the 1st Railway Battalion left W. by rail.

October 1.—One hundred Taman Cossacks, with their arms and horses, came in by rail from E.

October 2.—One hundred artillerymen with four Q.F. guns came in from Askabad. These are the last of the Merv Field Battery, which has been in Askabad all the summer.

October 3.—One hundred Kavkaz Cossacks came in from Kushk branch. Two hundred men of the 7th Transcaspian Battalion left W. by rail. They said they were going to Tejen.

There is cholera in Merv. Four or five deaths a day are occurring among the troops and other Russians.

About two-thirds of the Jamshedis who originally came across from Afghanistan have gone back again into Afghanistan.

These Jamshedis wanted to be all together in the Marachak district. This did not please the Russians, who wished to split them up; so they became discontented, and went back to their own country.

#### Charjui Report.

September 27.—One hundred infantry, with two machine-guns, passed W.

September 30.—A train passing through W. had six trucks of rails and two waggons of stores, said to include a number of boxes of rifles and a quantity of ammunition.

Garrison of Charjui:—

600 men, 17th Turkestan Battalion.

80 men, with horses and machine-guns.

400 men, 18th and 19th Battalions.

400 men, Amu Darya Flotilla.

200 men, Railway Battalion.

100 men, Frontier Battalion.

50 artillerymen.

#### Samarkand Report.

September 28.—The Governor-General arrived here and inspected the troops, stores and Government buildings.

September 29.—Sirdar Ishak Khan called on the Governor-General, and had a long private conversation with him.

September 30.—The Governor-General left by rail W.

(Signed)

H. SMYTH, Captain,  
Military Attaché.

Meshed, October 17, 1908.

[40782]

No. 238.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)

(No. 513.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, November 9, 1908.

I CALLED on M. Isvolsky this morning to inquire what news he had received from Tehran in regard to the intention of the Shah to abrogate the Constitution, as, from Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 366, the accomplishment of the act seemed to be imminent.

I found that M. Isvolsky had received no news at all from M. de Hartwig, so I read to him the substance of Sir G. Barclay's above-mentioned telegram, and I told his Excellency that subsequent to that telegram I had received another from Tehran stating that the identic Memorandum had been handed in to the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday; and as the Shah apparently had only promised to instruct the Grand Vizier to meet the wishes expressed in the petitions against the Constitution, it was just possible that the Shah might reconsider his position. At the same time the abrogation of the Constitution, if persisted in, would in all probability lead to grave



consequences; and in any case, in view of the advice which had been so often given to the Shah by the British and Russian Governments, such an act on the part of His Majesty should be viewed very seriously by both Governments. It seemed to me that the Shah should be in some way given to understand that he could not lightly disregard the counsels which had been proffered.

M. Isvolsky fully recognized the gravity of the situation, but he said he could hardly be expected to form a definite opinion until he had received some report from M. de Hartwig, for which he had telegraphed, as to what actually had occurred. He said he would like to know what steps I could suggest to mark the disapproval of the two Governments. I told him that it was a little difficult to indicate the measures which might be most appropriate. Mere protests would probably have but little effect, but perhaps if the Russian Government were to withdraw their officers for a limited time the Shah might comprehend that he could expect no assistance of any kind from Russia.

M. Isvolsky, who did not reject the suggestion absolutely, said that there were two grave objections to such a step. If the Russian officers were withdrawn, he had no doubt that either they would be immediately replaced by German or Austrian officers, or if the Cossack brigade were left without any European officers, it would be perfectly useless for the purposes of maintaining order. Besides, it might be better to await further and fuller information as to what had actually occurred; and the public telegrams treated the question as if the presentation of the petition was merely preparatory to some action on the part of the Shah, and had not stated that he had actually given his consent to the Constitution being abandoned.

As it seemed to me to be wiser, in the present phase, not to press further in regard to the withdrawal of the Russian officers, as I wished to give no cause for any suspicions on the part of M. Isvolsky, I left that portion of the question alone, and we proceeded to speak vaguely as to the possible consequences of the violation by the Shah of his promises. Should it be considered necessary later to moot again the question of the officers, it will be easy to recur to the subject now that it has been broached. Although M. Isvolsky himself might hereafter be not indisposed to examine the question seriously, I have doubts if others would be willing to recall the Russian officers from Tehran.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[40783]

No. 239.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 515.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 12, 1908.*

I HAVE communicated to M. Isvolsky a full summary of Mr. Marling's despatch regarding the financial condition of Persia, as I was desired to do in your despatch No. 311 of the 9th ultimo, and I have told his Excellency that I shall be happy to talk over the questions both of railways in Persia and of a loan whenever he is at leisure to deal with these subjects. I understand that there is no necessity to press on the above matters, and as M. Isvolsky is much occupied with questions of more immediate importance it is probable that some little time will elapse before he is able to take these other subjects into consideration.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[40786]

No. 240.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 23.)*

(No. 518. Confidential.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, October 12, 1908.*

M. ISVOLSKY read to me to-day portions of a long telegram which had arrived from Tehran, but which he told me had not been sent by the Legation, giving a very gloomy picture of the situation in the Persian capital. It was reported that the reactionaries were very few in number, but surrounded the Shah; that the finances were in a deplorable condition; and that M. Bizot found many obstacles placed in his

way; that the Government were incompetent, and the Shah of no account; while, if the Medjliss did assemble, it could do nothing but agitate, as there would be no serious work laid before it. M. Isvolsky said all this gave a most hopeless outlook, and it was difficult to see what efficient remedy could be applied.

I told him that it was necessary, in order to calm the populace, that the Medjliss should assemble, and perhaps some means could then be found to improve the situation. The main point was that the elections should be held, and the Assembly convened, and I trusted that, as a result of the audiences which I understand the British and Russian Ministers were to have of the Shah to-day, we should see that the efforts of the reactionaries were defeated.

M. Isvolsky said that he wished to tell me in confidence that he had telegraphed to M. de Hartwig to proceed to St. Petersburg, as he wished to consult him on the situation. His Excellency added that his telegram further stated that reports were being circulated in Tehran that, though Russia officially supported the convocation of an Assembly, she was really encouraging the Shah and the reactionaries. M. Isvolsky said that these reports were, as I knew, without any foundation. I replied that I trusted that events would prove the groundlessness of such charges. I confess that I felt inclined to return to the subject of the withdrawal of Colonel Liakhoff and his brother officers, but I felt that a continued reference to this point might be misunderstood.

I imagine that the telegram which M. Isvolsky had received had been sent to the Minister of Finance.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[40788]

No. 241.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 520.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 14, 1908.*

M. ISVOLSKY spoke to me last night in respect to the situation in Persia, which continues to fill him with uneasiness. He said that he had made up his mind on two points, which were non-intervention and no support to the Shah. This might be termed the negative side of a policy, but he was perplexed as to a positive policy. He saw quite clearly what he would not do, but he was puzzled as to what he would do. He did not view with satisfaction the possibility of the country drifting again into anarchy, which might give rise to events which might compel both Governments to intervene. He had thought of drawing up a project of reforms which, after consultation with His Majesty's Government, could be urged upon the Shah; but it seemed to him of little use to draw up projects when there were no men and no parties in Persia competent to put them into execution. M. de Hartwig was on his way, or would be very shortly on his way, to St. Petersburg, and on his arrival he thought of instituting a small Departmental Committee who might be able to draw up some scheme which would offer some remedy to the situation.

He was glad to say that the Viceroy of the Caucasus was acting in accord with him as to abstaining to the last moment from any intervention, tried as had been the forbearance and patience of the Russian Government. He had also been thinking over the suggestion which I had made to him of the withdrawal of the Russian officers as a mark of the displeasure of the Russian Government, but he feared that this would be a hazardous step to take in present circumstances, as without their presence no reliance could be placed on the Persian Cossack brigade to preserve any semblance of order. He would like to procure the recall of Colonel Liakhoff, and he was considering the best means of doing so, as that officer was practically independent of the Legation. He had in his mind an officer who would make an admirable successor, and who could be trusted to obey any orders which he received either from the Government or from the Legation. At the same time something should be done to relieve the present situation. The Shah appeared to be shuffling in regard to the electoral law and the convocation of the Assembly. Had I, he asked, who had been in Persia, any suggestions to make? I told M. Isvolsky that my knowledge of Persian affairs was of somewhat ancient date, as twenty years had elapsed since I had been there, and during my residence in Tehran the conditions were very different from those at present existing. I agreed with him that apparently there were no men and no parties who had evinced any promise of being able to grapple with a complicated situation. There had

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been one capable man, but he had been assassinated; and, personally, I had doubts if any real permanent improvement could be effected in Persia without foreign advice and control. I would convey to you what he had said to me, and perhaps you or those at Tehran might be able to propose some remedies, as I confess I saw none beyond the convocation of the Assembly. The results of our joint representations seemed so far to be rather inconclusive and not satisfactory.

This afternoon M. Isvolsky again recurred to the position of affairs in Persia, and especially to the condition of Azerbaijan. He said that Satar Khan had appointed a Governor at Persian Djulfa, who had displayed a red flag, and had been instantly joined by 100 or 150 revolutionaries from Russian territory. It was true that the trade routes were now open, but Russian subjects were being continually exposed to vexations and threats in Tabreez itself; and he was being reproached for sitting still and doing nothing. M. de Hartwig had reported that his advice and that of Sir G. Barclay had made some impression on the Shah; but no definite steps had as yet been taken by the latter to meet our wishes. Moreover, if the Assembly did meet, it would do nothing but agitate, and he did not look to it being able to restore affairs to a normal condition.

I told M. Isvolsky that we fully recognized the great forbearance which Russia had shown and was showing in exceedingly trying circumstances; and he doubtless had noticed that full testimony had been borne by the Prime Minister to the patience of Russia and her loyal observance of the Convention. I thought we should continue to insist on the promulgation of the electoral law and the convocation of an Assembly; and if these measures were carried out, some alleviation of the situation might be produced. I told him that I had telegraphed to you a summary of the observations which he had made to me yesterday night; and I would let him know your reply directly I received it.

I should add that he had inquired of me last night if I had received any news of troubles having broken out in the south of Persia; and I replied in the negative. He told me to-day that M. de Hartwig would arrive in St. Petersburg in about ten days' time.

The situation in Azerbaijan is doubtless causing the Russian Government anxiety, especially on account of the independent action which Satar Khan adopts, and the active sympathy which is being shown for him and his cause by revolutionaries in the Caucasus.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[40794]

No. 242.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 526.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 18, 1908.*

I SHOULD report that M. Isvolsky again mentioned to me to-day, as indeed is the case at nearly every interview which I have with him, the difficulty which he is experiencing in resisting the appeals which are made to him for some protection of Russian interests in Azerbaijan. He told me that the commerce of Russia is suffering severely, and that Russian subjects are being threatened and troubled, and he does not know whether he will be able to preserve a passive attitude for very much longer. The Russian press were occupying themselves with the subject, and were calling upon the Government to take some measures. Satar Khan was in a sense the master of the situation, but he was really governed by the Caucasian revolutionaries, who were ready for any mischief.

I can only counsel patience to M. Isvolsky, but he considers this poor consolation, and, in fact, he is becoming a little restive against such advice.

This morning both the "Novoe Vremya" and the "Bourse Gazette" have articles on the condition of affairs in Azerbaijan. The former journal says: "Owing to Russian non-interference in Azerbaijan and the impotence of the Shah, the position of Satar Khan in Tabreez is becoming firmer, and the situation more chaotic. In time gone by Russia would certainly have acted differently. Khiva, Kokand, and Turcomania lost their freedom for having attacked Russian caravans. But now times have changed. Russian commerce continues to suffer, and for how long is this state of affairs to last? If England had been in the position of Russia she would not have been so patient. Besides the inevitable material losses which Russia has suffered, there is the loss of moral

prestige. If only Satar Khan confined himself to his quarrel with the Shah instead of adopting a persistently hostile attitude towards Russia, no one could complain. There is further a danger to Russia in respect to the Trans-Caucasian Tartars, who are carefully watching events at Tabreez, and who already regard Satar Khan as a hero. Moreover, there is a danger in the attitude of Turkey in regard to Persian affairs, and the Province of Azerbaijan, with its strategic positions, may prove too tempting a bait for the Young Turk as well for the Old Turk party. In fact the Azerbaijan question, from various points of view, is becoming important and acute for Russia."

The "Bourse Gazette" says, whether M. de Hartwig returns to Tehran or not, there is no doubt that neither the interests nor the prestige of Russia has been adequately defended. The journal is unable to understand why Russia remains a passive spectator of events in Persia. If not to-day then to-morrow Azerbaijan will declare its independence, and then Russia will have a new unruly neighbour. The "Bourse Gazette" considers that Russian diplomacy should categorically demand the convocation of the Assembly, and in conjunction with England take upon itself the task of pacifying Persia. Russian policy in Persia must become more energetic if Russia does not wish the opportunity to be taken advantage of by Turkey.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[40995]

No. 243.

*Messrs. Ellinger and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received November 23.)*

Sir,

*28, Oxford Street, Manchester, November 20, 1908.*

FOR your information we hand you inclosed copy of letter written to-day to Mr. Wilson Fox regarding the Oxide Concession at Hormuz, of the contents of which you will perhaps inform Sir Richmond Ritchie.

Faithfully yours,  
(Signed) ELLINGER AND CO.

Inclosure in No. 243.

*Mr. Ellinger to Mr. Wilson Fox (Board of Trade).*

Dear Mr. Wilson Fox,

*November 20, 1908.*

I REGRET to hear that you are confined to the house for some time, and trust the rest may completely restore you.

I saw Mr. Strick last week in reference to the contract for the oxide, but I am sorry to say that I could make no progress.

Mr. Strick refused to contract on the terms which he accepted in August last, and on being asked to state on what terms he would contract, he gave me to understand that in his opinion his best policy is to sit still and wait until the Mouin is in such a position that Mr. Strick can dictate to him his own terms. He also informed me that one of the conditions of any future contract must give him the right to terminate the contract at any time and should the quality of the oxide deteriorate. I am of the opinion that the Mouin will not accept any contract containing this condition, nor do I see any reason to suppose that any necessity will arise for him to allow Mr. Strick to dictate to him his own terms for a new oxide contract. Probably when Mr. Strick realizes this, in course of time he will become more reasonable, and in the meantime we have again written to the Mouin strongly urging upon him the advisability of making reasonable terms on which a Company could be formed, or, failing this, of concluding a contract of some years' duration. In accordance with a suggestion made by Sir Richmond Ritchie in our last interview, we have pointed out to the Mouin that, although he can rely upon the absolute protection of his property in the event of a Company being formed, and upon the benevolent protection of the British Government during the currency of a *bond fide* contract, he cannot count upon our being able to induce His Majesty's Government to protect him should the necessity arise if we base our application upon a contract made after the urgency has arisen and having the appear-



ance of being made for the purpose of securing this protection. We are afraid that there is nothing more to be done at the moment, and regret that your kind offices and your trouble have not had a more satisfactory result.

Faithfully yours  
[Unsigned.]

[41018]

No. 244.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 268.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 23, 1908.*

M. ISVOLSKY and I met by chance to-day and exchanged a few words on the subject of the Shah's recent Rescript. I remarked that the two Representatives at Tehran seemed to advocate the inclusion of some menace in any representations which they might be called upon to make. M. Isvolsky seemed to take the view that, as a policy of strict non-intervention in internal affairs had always been pursued by England and Russia, and as they had contented themselves with offering advice in a friendly manner, a menace would be inappropriate. He also seemed to think that we had always considered that the Shah and his people should be allowed to settle their own differences unmolested, and this is indeed the view which we adopted when we suggested to the Russian Government that reinforcements should not be sent to Tabreez as a measure of protection.

My only reason for mentioning the above is that it indicates that difficulties may be made by M. Isvolsky as to taking strong measures such as the suggested seizure of the Northern and Southern Customs, though he would, I think, be quite prepared to join in sending to the Shah a note of remonstrance couched in strong terms.

I told M. Isvolsky that I expected to hear further from you to-morrow on the subject.

[40888]

No. 245.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 393.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 23, 1908.*

HORMUZ and Sirri oxide.

The note respecting Sirri oxide, as finally authorized in your telegram No. 319 of the 16th instant, has not yet been sent in to the Persian Government, and I now hear that Moin-ut-Tajar claims that the general terms of his Firman cover Sirri as well. It is probable that Moin would regard the note as a hostile move, and Strick's chances of coming to an agreement about Hormuz would thereby be prejudiced.

Would it not be advisable to hold over the note for the present if there is a reasonable prospect of an agreement between Strick and Moin being reached before long?

[40945]

No. 246.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 394.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 23, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution.

With reference to my telegram No. 392 of yesterday's date, I find that M. Sabline is of opinion that if a threat were made to the Shah privately, as I had contemplated, in regard to the officers of the Cossack brigade, it would be useless. Such a threat, if it were made in such a manner as to become public, might move him, but the danger to tranquillity which publicity would involve is clear. The effect on the Shah of any threat made to him is likely to be more correctly gauged by the Russian Legation than by our own.

I have discussed the situation at length with M. Sabline, and I consider that it would be best if the two Representatives were to ask the Shah for a joint audience, at which we should make the following demands:—(1) That the Grand Vizier and Amir Bahadur Jang, to whom the reactionary policy of His Majesty must be chiefly

ascribed, may be removed; and (2) that a Decree re-establishing the Constitution may be issued. We should also threaten that, unless these demands were complied with within a few days, the two countries would seize the northern and southern customs.

I should, however, mention that the Russian Legation think we should probably have to execute this threat, as the threat of itself would in their opinion very likely not prove effective.

[41019]

No. 247.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 395.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 23, 1908.*

SITUATION at Tabreez.

In a telegram No. 70, dated yesterday, His Majesty's Consul-General reports that the Nationalists captured Marend on the evening of the 21st instant, and that according to Russian accounts they have pillaged the road station in the Derediz, and that the employés have fled. Mr. Wratislaw doubts that the Nationalists have pillaged the road station, but thinks it is probably true that the employés have fled.

[40747]

No. 248.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 325.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 23, 1908.*

THE action taken by you, as reported in your telegram No. 391 of yesterday, with regard to the Rescript lately issued by the Shah is approved.

[40748]

No. 249.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 616.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 23, 1908.*

THE Persian Constitution having been abolished by the Shah's last Rescript, the Russian and British Governments must give the situation in Persia, which has arisen from this measure, their careful consideration.

We considered, before the Shah had issued his recent Rescript, that it would be possible to put pressure on His Majesty in order to oblige him to keep the promises he had made with regard to the summoning of a Parliament and the maintenance of the Constitution, and that the desired result would have been obtained by a simple threat on our part and on the part of Russia to seize the custom-houses on the southern and northern frontiers respectively. Though His Majesty's Government and the Russian Government would have every justification for taking this step on the ground that the payments of the debt have not been made, yet, if this were once done, withdrawal would not be easy, and such a proceeding would constitute an act of direct intervention in the affairs of Persia, which might create a precedent for further and less desirable acts of the same nature. If the Shah were to disregard such a threat on our part, we should be compelled to resort to action of a definite nature, and, as I am opposed to this alternative, I do not desire to employ the threat of it.

I also fully realize the force of the objections to withdrawing the Russian officers from Tehran, but if the suggestion contained in your telegram No. 253 of the 14th November were carried out, and Colonel Liakhoff's place were taken by some other officer, this would produce a good moral effect, as such a step would tend to restore confidence in their impartiality.

It seems to me that on the whole the best thing to do would be to allow the Nationalists in Persia to exercise pressure on the Shah. This might be effected if the two Representatives made a joint communication to the Shah to the effect that we now propose to rely on the Nationalists forces in Azerbaijan for the protection of trade and foreigners, seeing that His Majesty has proved himself incapable of establishing his authority there and has destroyed all chance of himself keeping

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order through the deliberate non-fulfilment of his engagement respecting the Constitution; and further, that in the event of any other disorders arising out of attempts to reassert his position while the Constitution, which alone can be looked to as a means to remedy the state of anarchy in the northern provinces, is not in force we shall hold him entirely responsible.

A communication might at the same time be made to Sattar Khan that, owing to the proximity of the province to the Russian frontier, Russia will be compelled to intervene in Tabreez unless the Nationalist forces will undertake to protect foreigners and trade in general, and Russian interests in particular, and we should be ready to give instructions to Mr. Wratislaw to signify our adherence to such a recommendation and to give it his support.

The best course seems to me to be to abstain from intervention in Persian internal affairs and to let the natives arrive at a solution among themselves, but should the more powerful party in Azerbaijan maintain an unfriendly attitude towards Russia, I realize the difficulty of adhering to this policy of non-intervention.

These views should be communicated to M. Isvolsky with the request that if he approves them the Russian Representative at Tehran may receive instructions to act accordingly.

[41336]

No. 250.

*Memorandum communicated by Count Benckendorff, November 24, 1908.*

LE Capitaine de l'armée Allemande Gotfried Stewer serait arrivé à Tabriz vers la mi-Octobre.

Deux Allemands seraient occupés à Tabriz à lever des plans de la ville; deux instructeurs de même nationalité y seraient attendus en vue d'y faire faire des travaux de fortifications; les Allemands fournissent aux révolutionnaires par la frontière Turque des munitions, des armes, et de l'argent.

D'après des renseignements d'une autre source, les travaux de fortifications de Tabriz seraient dirigés par deux officiers Allemands et trois officiers Turcs.

Il semble établi que Sattar Khan profite des conseils d'un Allemand nommé Schunemann, représentant à Tabriz de la Société Anonyme Aslan, qui aurait été précédemment attaché en qualité de dessinateur à l'école des missionnaires Allemands; il est dans le pays depuis neuf ans, en possède la langue, et agirait comme agent secret du Ministre d'Allemagne à Téhéran.

D'autre part, on assure qu'il se trouve près de Sattar Khan un officier Turc de la garnison de Trébizonde, Mahmoud Bey, élevé en Allemagne; de plus, les révolutionnaires attendaient l'arrivée d'un certain Ibrahim Pacha, fils d'Adin Pacha.

Il y aurait là, dit-on encore, deux officiers de sapeurs de l'armée Allemande et un Géorgien occupés d'ériger dans le faubourg Oumerhis un bastion muni de mines dans quatre directions.

D'après une autre version, un Allemand ainsi que Mahmoud Bey, celui-ci se disant également sujet Allemand, aurait quitté le 8 Novembre en compagnie de Schunemann, faute d'avoir pu s'arranger quant à la rémunération; ils auraient promis d'envoyer des personnes moins exigeantes.

On se demande si au nombre de ces mystérieux personnages ne se trouverait pas M. Anders, actuellement drogman de l'Ambassade d'Allemagne à Constantinople, dont la présence aurait été signalée à Tabriz. Ce serait un individu très adroit, qui du temps où il gérait le Consulat à Bagdad aurait poussé les Turcs à des empiètements en Perse, et qui l'an dernier, au moment des troubles à Téhéran, s'y trouvait auprès de Richthofen.

[41084]

No. 251.

*War Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 24.)*

THE Director of Military Operations presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, with reference to his recent inquiry as to the number of Russian officers with the Persian Cossack Brigade, begs to inform

him that a letter received to-day from His Majesty's Military Attaché at Tehran states the number to be five. The Military Attaché further writes that he has learnt on good authority that two more Russian officers are to be appointed to the brigade.

*War Office, November 23, 1908.*

[41154]

No. 252.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 24.)*

(No. 269.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 24, 1908.*

PERSIA. Your telegram No. 616, Confidential, of the 23rd instant.

This afternoon I informed M. Isvolsky of the nature of the communications which you propose might be made to the Shah and to Sattar Khan.

M. Isvolsky said that the matter required very serious study, but I should like to give you, confidentially, the first impressions which your proposals made on him.

The suggested communication to the Shah, he considered, would amount practically to intervention on behalf of the rival party in the struggle; that if the Shah did proclaim a Constitution, it did not follow with any certainty that the disorders in Azerbaijan would cease; that to say that the Shah, by his action, had destroyed all prospect of being able to maintain order in Azerbaijan was a large assumption; that he knew for a fact that the Young Turks were encouraging Sattar Khan, and that matters were thereby complicated.

There seems also to be some doubt in M. Isvolsky's mind as to whether direct dealings with Sattar Khan might not convey the impression that we were recognizing him as the *de facto* local authority, and as a power independent of the Shah at Tehran.

I observed that we were quite justified in explaining to the Shah the consequences of violating his promises, and disregarding our advice, and that such a step on our part would not constitute intervention on behalf of one party in the struggle; that in Azerbaijan the principal cause of the disturbances had been the dissolution of the Assembly, and that it could be assumed that these disturbances would be removed by its re-establishment; if the re-establishment of the Assembly did not have that effect, it would then be clear that Sattar Khan had ulterior designs; that the suggested communication to Sattar Khan would show him that Great Britain admitted the right of Russia to intervene in the event of disorders continuing and increasing; that the powerlessness of the Shah had been clearly demonstrated by recent events; and that if Sattar Khan was receiving encouragement from the Young Turks, that manoeuvre would probably be put an end to by our co-operation with Russia. I added that in my opinion an admirable effect would be produced both on the Shah and on Sattar Khan by the suggested communications, and that the position of Russia would be strengthened by them.

M. Isvolsky concluded our interview by saying that he would think the matter over. His attitude disappointed me a little, as I thought that our co-operation at Tabreez at any rate would have been welcomed by him. It is possible, however, that he may still agree with your proposals when he has had time to reflect on them, though they struck him as drastic at first sight.

M. Isvolsky will doubtless take the Emperor's orders on the subject to-day, for this is the day on which he has audience.

[41077]

No. 253.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 24.)*

(No. 396.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 24, 1908.*

RETENTION of oil guard. My telegram No. 387 of the 19th instant.

Lieutenant Wilson is supported by the local Manager of the Oil Syndicate in his opinion that it is undesirable at present to withdraw the guard.



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No. 254.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 24.)*

(No. 397.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 24, 1908.*

MR. WRATISLAW telegraphs from Tabreez that an attack on Mushamba is about to be renewed by Rahim Khan's men, and that other Armenian villages will be attacked also.

The Russian Chargé d'Affaires and I are pressing that the Shah will issue peremptory orders to Rahim Khan to desist from such depredations, but His Majesty's Consul-General fears that he may be beyond control.

[41152]

No. 255.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 24.)*

(No. 398.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 23, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution.

The Shah was much frightened by our representation of the 22nd instant, and has given orders that the Rescript is to be suppressed. The Shah is sending the Minister for Foreign Affairs to call on me to-morrow in order to explain away its meaning, and his Highness is charged by His Majesty to say that he intends to keep his pledges.

The situation being now altered, M. Sabline and I are asking for an audience for the two dragomans who, in accordance with the sanction conveyed to me in your telegram No. 326 of the 23rd instant, will have a frank discussion with the Shah.

[41153]

No. 256.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 24.)*

(No. 399.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 24, 1908.*

HIS Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, in a telegram No. 73 dated to-day, reports that the Nationalists, after a brush with Chardowleh horsemen, have occupied Binab on the eastern shore of Lake Urumia.

[41147]

No. 257.

*Consul Stevens to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 24.)*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Batoum, November 24, 1908.*

CONCENTRATION of Russian troops at Julfa.

Reports 200 artillery with eight guns, and one battalion rifle brigade 550 strong.

[40748]

No. 258.

*Memorandum communicated to Count Benckendorff, November 24, 1908.*

THE Rescript of the Shah of Persia which abolishes the Constitution calls for careful consideration on the part of His Majesty's Government and the Russian Government.

His Majesty's Government had, before this incident had taken place, contemplated the possibility of compelling the Shah to summon Parliament and fulfil his pledges to maintain the Constitution by exercising pressure upon him, and it was then thought that the mere threat that Russia and England would seize the custom-houses in the north and south respectively would have effected the object in view. As the payments of interest on the Debt are in arrear, the two Powers would have been justified in putting this threat into execution, but it would be difficult to withdraw once this had been done.

His Majesty's Government are now, however, reluctant to resort to this step, since, if the threat proved ineffective, it would have to be followed by definite action, involving

direct intervention in the internal affairs of Persia, with the possibility of a further and more undesirable application of the same principle.

The objections to the withdrawal of the Russian officers from Tehran are evidently strong, though, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, a good moral effect would be produced if the officer now in command of the Cossack brigade were replaced, as was suggested by M. Isvolsky on the 14th instant, and confidence in their impartiality thus restored.

The view of His Majesty's Government is that it is best to give the Persians time to fight out, without interference, their own internal quarrel; though, if the party uppermost in Azerbaijan adopts an attitude hostile to Russia, there may be difficulty in adhering to this policy.

On the whole, His Majesty's Government are disposed think that the best course would be to let the pressure of the Nationalists have its full effect upon the Shah. In order to effect this, the following course of action might be adopted:—

A communication might be made to Sattar Khan to the effect that the Russian Government can, owing to the proximity of Azerbaijan to the Russian frontier, only abstain from intervention in that province provided that the Nationalist forces secure protection for foreign subjects and trade generally and Russian interests in particular. His Majesty's Government would be fully prepared to instruct the British Consul-General to join in or support a representation of his Russian colleague to this effect.

At the same time a joint communication might be made to the Shah by the British and Russian Representatives at Tehran, stating that, as His Majesty has failed to re-establish his authority in Azerbaijan, and has, by the deliberate breach of his pledge regarding the Constitution, destroyed all prospect of being able himself to maintain order, the two Governments propose to look to the Nationalist forces there to protect foreigners and trade, holding the Shah responsible for any further disturbance due to his efforts to re-establish his authority in Azerbaijan so long as he suspends the Constitution, which is the only hope of restoring order in the north of Persia.

His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg has been instructed to submit these views to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

*Foreign Office, November 24, 1908.*

[40888]

No. 259.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 24, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, the accompanying copy of a telegram, dated the 23rd instant, from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, respecting the views of the Moin-ut-Tujjar on the subject of the Red Oxide Concession on the Island of Sirri.

Sir E. Grey understands that there is little prospect of an immediate agreement being reached between Messrs. Ellinger and Co., Messrs. Strick and Co., and the Moin in regard to the exports of red oxide from Hormuz.

In these circumstances I am to request that Sir E. Grey may be furnished with Lord Morley's views as to the reply which should be sent to Sir G. Barclay.

I am, &amp;c.

(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

[40888]

No. 260.

*Foreign Office to Board of Trade.*

(Confidential.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 24, 1908.*

WITH reference to previous correspondence respecting the export of red oxide from the Persian Gulf, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to state, for the information of the Board of Trade, that a telegram, dated the 23rd November, has been received from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran to the effect that the Moin-ut-



Tujjar claims that, under the Firman of 1904, the island of Sirri is included in the Concession granted to him by the Persian Government.

As you are aware, the territorial ownership of Sirri is disputed, the island being claimed by Persia and by the Jowasmi Sheikh of Shargah, who is under British protection. In 1888 it was occupied by the Persian Government. His Majesty's Government protested at the time; and although they refrained from taking forcible action on behalf of the Sheikh of Shargah, they have never acquiesced in the justice of the Persian claim.

When, therefore, Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co., of Manchester, intimated to His Majesty's Government their desire to secure a Concession for working red oxide on the island of Sirri, it was decided that His Majesty's Minister should not oppose their efforts, but that he should address a note to the Persian Government stating that if a Concession were granted to any applicant not approved by His Majesty's Government, the question as to the territorial status of Sirri would forthwith be reopened.

Sir G. Barclay now reports that the note in question would probably be regarded by the Moins as a hostile move, and that it would therefore be prejudicial to Messrs. Strick's chances of coming to terms on the subject of exporting red oxide from Hormuz. In these circumstances, Sir G. Barclay suggests that, if there is a reasonable prospect of agreement being reached in regard to Hormuz before long, it might be advisable to hold back the projected note to the Persian Government for the present.

Sir E. Grey considers that it will be impracticable, on political grounds, to admit the Moins' claim that the oxide mines at Sirri are included in his Concession. He would, however, be glad to receive the observations of the Board of Trade upon the situation which has arisen, and, more especially, as to whether any further steps can be taken to expedite an agreement in regard to the export of oxide from the Island of Hormuz.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

[41284]

No. 261.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 25.)*

(No. 400.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 25, 1908.

I HAVE received a visit this morning from the Minister of Foreign Affairs who called by command of the Shah. He told me that our joint representations of last Sunday had caused His Majesty great annoyance, especially the passage in the note about the evil counsels of his entourage. I think, however, there can be little doubt that what had really caused most displeasure was the fact that the note was a joint one signed by the two Representatives.

Ala-es-Saltaneh then proceeded to explain away the recent Rescript which, he said, was no more than the Shah's answer to a petition from the Ulama. It was not an official Decree, and so far as his Highness knew it was not by the Shah's command that it had been printed. Besides this, it only rejected the idea of a Medjliss like the last. His Majesty was still resolved to grant a Medjliss suited to the country and in accord with Mahomedan law as promised in his Decree of the 2nd October.

Ala-es-Saltaneh endeavoured to induce me to ask for a private audience for myself instead of the audience which we had asked for for the two dragomans, but I pointed out that my last private audience had been productive of no results, and I gave him to understand that my next audience would be a joint one with my Russian colleague and under instructions from my Government. It was with the object of rendering such a formal audience unnecessary that I wish the dragomans to see the Shah alone and have a frank conversation with him.

His Highness consented to take His Majesty's pleasure.

Ala-es-Saltaneh again spoke of the approaching establishment of a kind of Council of State.

[40416]

No. 262.

*Foreign Office to Mr. M. Ellinger.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 25, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant respecting the attitude of His Majesty's Government on the subject of the Red Oxide Concession on the Island of Hormuz.

I am to inform you that the reply to the question you ask is in the affirmative.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[41336]

No. 263.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 331.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 26, 1908.*

WITH reference to German officers mentioned in your telegram No. 389 of the 20th instant, I have received detailed information from the Russian Government concerning several German officers and other Germans at Tabreez. It is stated that Sattar Khan is receiving both military and political assistance from them.

Mr. Wratislaw should telegraph whether any signs of activity, either political or military, are visible on the part of Germans in the town, and also their names and positions.

[41466]

No. 264.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 27.)*

(No. 274.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 27, 1908.*

SITUATION in Azerbaijan.

Last night M. Isvolsky spoke to me on the state of affairs in this province. He said that since February no tolls had been taken on the Julfa-Tabreez road, which had cost about 10,000,000 roubles to make. Russian subjects had already sent in claims amounting to about 150,000l. This state of things was greatly troubling the Minister of Finance, who was urging that Russian interests should receive some sort of protection. Anarchy was not diminishing but was rather increasing. He assured me that it was an undoubted fact that the movement was being encouraged by the Young Turk Committee, who were preaching a Pan-Islamic Liberal Union through their emissaries at Tabreez. M. Isvolsky said that he considered the Committee of Union and Progress of more importance than the Ottoman Government, and asked whether it would not be possible for His Majesty's Government to obtain from the former a declaration that it was not their intention to intervene in the affairs of Persia, and that they would hold themselves aloof from Sattar Khan entirely. M. Isvolsky was of opinion that such a declaration would ease the situation, and begged me to convey the suggestion to you. He fears, I imagine, that Russia, if compelled to intervene, might find herself in collision with the Young Turk Committee, unless the latter had given some sort of declaration formally dissociating themselves from all connection with the affairs of Azerbaijan.

I then asked M. Isvolsky whether he would wish me to telegraph to you, suggesting that a communication should be made to Sattar Khan on the lines proposed in your telegram No. 616 of the 23rd instant. M. Isvolsky's reply was to the effect that any such communication to Sattar Khan would practically amount to his recognition as an authority, and such recognition would create an unfortunate impression among the revolutionaries in the Caucasus.

With regard to the communication to the Shah suggested in your above-mentioned telegram, M. Isvolsky expressed the opinion that, in view of the Shah's withdrawal of his rescript, such a communication would be no longer necessary. I pointed out that the Shah's attitude changed from day to day, and that His Majesty was quite untrustworthy.

I trust that the joint audience of the two dragomans will take place, for I notice



in M. Isvolsky a tendency to accept the scheme for the establishment of a Council of Notables as a satisfactory solution, and such a Council might be composed entirely of the Shah's creatures.

I believe that a Committee consisting of Delegates from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance, and Commerce is associated with M. de Hartwig in the examination here of the situation in Persia, and I fear that their advice may be for a modified programme as far as a Persian Constitution is concerned. It would be well, therefore, if the Shah could be induced to publish as soon as possible an Electoral Law and Constitution.

41446] No. 265.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 27.)*

(No. 401.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 27, 1908.*

GERMANS at Tabreez. Your telegram No. 331 of the 26th instant.

The following is the substance of Mr. Wratislaw's telegram on which my telegram No. 373 was based:—

"Following is confidential. A German named Shuneman is one of the 'German officers' referred to. He was for some years attached to the German orphanage at Khoi as carpenter, and came to Tabreez to start a furniture shop years ago. Latterly he has been engaged in settling the affairs of the German Arslan Company on whose behalf he was acting.

"A son of a shareholder in that Company who acts as his assistant is the second 'officer.' M. Pakhitonoff says they have given advice as to the erection of fortifications, but so far as I can ascertain they have no technical knowledge. Shuneman has recently left Tabreez for Khoi where he wishes to wind up his affairs.

"The presence of any Turkish officers is emphatically denied by the Turkish Consul-General, nor can I hear that there are any in the town."

Instructions in the sense of your telegram No. 331 are being sent to Mr. Wratislaw.

Should Anders be one of the German officers referred to as having given assistance to the Nationalists of Tabreez, I think that it could be proved by inquiry that he had not left his post at the German Embassy at Constantinople.

[41468] No. 266.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 27.)*

(No. 402.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 27, 1908.*

I LEARN that the Persian ex-Ambassador at Constantinople, Ala-ul-Mulk, is leaving next week on a special mission in order to convey the condolences of the Shah on the death of the Grand Duke Alexis to the Emperor at St. Petersburg.

He will endeavour while at St. Petersburg to obtain some mitigation of the present attitude of the Russian Government towards the internal affairs of Persia. He will then go to Berlin to complain of alleged Anglo-Russian intervention.

I have this information on respectable authority, and M. Sabline's information confirms it.

[41953] No. 267.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 389.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 27, 1908.*

I GAVE Count Benckendorff to-day a copy of the report of the answers I had made in the House of Commons yesterday in reply to questions about Persia.

I explained that several of the answers were in reply to supplementary questions, and were therefore unpremeditated, but I thought there was nothing in any of the replies I had made that could create any difficulties for the Russian Government.

Count Benckendorff, who had read the report, concurred in this opinion.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. GREY.

[41951]

No. 268.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir C. MacDonald.*

(No. 293.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 27, 1908.*

IN the course of conversation with the Japanese Chargé d'Affaires to-day I told him that Persia was in a very unsatisfactory condition, but the Russian Government, although they had received very great provocation in the northern provinces of Persia which bordered on Russian territory, had abstained from intervention.

Our relations with the Russian Government in regard to Persia has continued frank and cordial, and, owing to our Convention, I did not think that anything which could happen in Persia would cause trouble between Russia and us.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. GREY.

[40517]

No. 269.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 27, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant respecting a proposal that an increment should be made in the pay of Lieutenants Wilson and Ranking, officers who arrived in Persia about the 17th December, 1907, at the time of the increase of the Ahwaz Consular guard.

I am to state, in reply, that Sir E. Grey considers it would be inadvisable to approach the Treasury with a view to their accepting, as a charge against Imperial revenues, a moiety of the increased expenditure involved, until the question of how long the guard is to be retained for the protection of the Oil Syndicate's employés has been settled.

I am to add that Treasury sanction to charge half the cost of the increased guard to Imperial funds has only been obtained till the 17th June last.

Sir E. Grey presumes that Lieutenant Ranking's pay will be affected by whether or not he assumes charge of His Majesty's Vice-Consulate at Ahwaz when His Majesty's Vice-Consul proceeds on leave of absence.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[41621]

No. 270.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 28.)*

(No. 277.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 28, 1908.*

PERSIA. I am told by the Turkish Ambassador that M. Isvolsky mentioned to him yesterday the report that the Young Turk Committee were encouraging the Nationalist party at Tabreez by sending them medals, &c. M. Isvolsky remarked to the Ambassador that the relations existing between Russia and Turkey were very friendly, and that he would deeply regret if any cloud arose to disturb them. The Ambassador explained that the medals had no significance, and that any one could buy them in the streets of Constantinople, but promised that he would telegraph to his Government in accordance with M. Isvolsky's wish.

I said to my Turkish colleague that, in my opinion, what M. Isvolsky would really like would be some sort of assurance from the Young Turk Committee that they had no desire to mix themselves up in any way with Azerbaijan affairs.



[41618]

No. 271.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 28.)*

(No. 403.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 28, 1908.*

GERMANS at Tabreez. Referring to your telegram No. 331 of the 28th instant.

I have received the following telegram from Mr. Consul-General Wratislaw to-day :—

"I should be glad if you could let me have any details furnished to the Foreign Office by the Russian Government in regard to Germans at Tabreez in order that I may be able to check them. Such military advice as Sattar Khan gets is, according to popular belief here, given to him by Russian subjects who have been in Russian service. I reported in my telegram No. 60 the only Germans whom M. Pokhitonoff mentioned to me, and I know of no more in Tabreez."

[41619]

No. 272.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 28.)*

(No. 404.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 28, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution.

A little time might, I think, be allowed to elapse before making any further joint formal representations, in order that the full effect of our strong joint action on the 22nd instant and of the audience to-day of the two dragomans may be seen. The audience of the dragomans was not unsatisfactory. In reply to their representations His Majesty repeated that he had had no intention of abandoning all idea of an Assembly when he published his recent Rescript. He was now considering what ought to be done, and he should not be hurried in his deliberations. The Minister for Foreign Affairs would in due course inform the two Legations of the result of these deliberations, but he could at once say that a Council, which would meet to-morrow, had been appointed. The dragomans pointed out that an elective body was what was chiefly needed, and urged that the drawing up of a scheme for a suitable representative body should be intrusted to the Council.

There is no doubt that it will require pressure to induce the Shah to consent to the Council being given this task, but it seems to me the line of least resistance, and if we do not wish to use any definite threat, it would, I think, be best to utilize the Council as a step towards a Medjliss, though, of course, the success of this must depend to a large extent on the men who are chosen to form the Council.

The following is very confidential :—

His Majesty can now no longer be in any doubt as to the genuine co-operation of the two Legations, in view of the joint representations of the past week.

[41685]

No. 273.

*Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 30.)*

(No. 779.)

Sir,

*Pera, November 17, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a letter which I have received from the Persian Ambassador at Constantinople, transmitting copy of a note addressed by him to the Sublime Porte, a telegram he received from the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and a letter from Mohtashem-ul-Sultaneh with regard to the non-evacuation by Ottoman troops of certain places on the Persian side of the frontier.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 273.

*Prince M. Riza Khan to Sir G. Lowther.**Ambassade de Perse, Constantinople,  
le 10 Novembre, 1908.*

M. l'Ambassadeur et cher Collègue,

J'AI l'honneur d'envoyer ci-incluse à votre Excellence la copie de la note que j'ai remise aujourd'hui à la Sublime Porte, ainsi que les copies d'une dépêche du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères de Téhéran et d'une lettre de son Excellence Motecham-ul-Sultaneh, y annexées.

Veuillez, &amp;c.

(Signé) M. RIZA KHAN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 273.

*Note communicated by Prince M. Riza Khan to the Ottoman Government.*

(Translation.)

*November 10, 1908.*

INCLOSED is a translation of a telegram just received from the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs, stating that not only have the occupied territories not been evacuated by the Ottoman troops but other points have been encroached upon. It is therefore requested that instructions may be sent by telegraph to the proper quarter for the speedy evacuation of the said places, thus fulfilling the promises and assurances made in this respect, and that the result may be communicated to the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Inclosure 3 in No. 273.

*Telegram communicated by the Persian Ministry for Foreign Affairs to  
Prince M. Riza Khan.*

(Translation.)

ACCORDING to numerous telegrams received during the last two days from Urumia and Soujboulak, although the number of Turkish troops has been reduced, a place has yet been evacuated. During the last two days they have occupied thirty-eight well-known villages, and have quartered soldiers in five of them. To other points also they have lately dispatched 260 men. They have prepared war stores in Zemistan, and perhaps intend to occupy other places. They have collected from the said places large sums of money and quantities of provisions under the name of taxes, and the district of Enzal is subject to the attacks of their soldiers. A telegram from Kurdistan states that the surrounding district is also being occupied. The troops in Sumai and Chehrek have not been reduced. Izzet Pasha having sent Lieutenant Ahmed to Silduz with a considerable force, the latter began to interfere in the affairs of this place.

It is therefore requested that orders may be sent for the evacuation of the above-mentioned places.

Inclosure 4 in No. 273.

*Letter from Mohtashem-ul-Sultaneh.*

(Translation.)

WE have to renew the application so often made :

In spite of our repeated prayers the Turkish forces have not yet evacuated the occupied points; not only have they not carried out the promises and assurances made both to us and the intermediary Powers, but they have interfered increasingly and in other places. The British Consul-General, who has been a witness of the state of affairs, has informed his Government of the facts. Although for a few days troops were moved, it was with the object either of sending others in their place or of reducing forces in unimportant posts. No Convention has been carried out, and they are seizing supplies. If they would evacuate these points and cease from incitement and encroachment, order could be easily maintained on the frontier with our existing forces. According to present information, there are in Pasveh some hundred soldiers,



with two mountain guns, under the command of Colonel Vissim. In Serdesht there are eighty men and four guns; in Baneh, forty soldiers, with their officers. The villages within half a mile of Soujboulak are in the possession of the above-mentioned forces, which are under the direction of Ottoman officials, and insist that they are Ottoman. As the Ottoman troops have no intention of evacuating the places they are occupying—Chehrek, Sumai, Baradost, Silduz, Baranduz, and other places—we beg that strict orders may be sent for their withdrawal.

[41715]

No. 274.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 30.)*

(No. 405.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 30, 1908.

MISSION of Ala-ul-Mulk to St. Petersburg.

Referring to my telegram No. 402 of the 27th instant, I learn from M. Sabline that he telegraphed similar particulars in regard to Ala-ul-Mulk's mission to St. Petersburg, and that his Government have now told him that the Emperor declines all manifestations of sympathy on the death of the Grand Duke Alexis, and that he should inform the Persian Government in this sense.

[41752]

No. 275.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 30.)*

(No. 406.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 30, 1908.

THE Shah and Constitution.

I have received the reply of the Persian Government to our joint note of the 22nd instant. Our charge against the camerilla of giving the Shah evil counsels is repudiated as unauthenticated, and the note adds that the Shah stands in no need of advice from his entourage. The Persian Government requests us to inform our Governments that the Shah intends to grant an Assembly which shall be suited to the habits of the people and the nature of the country and shall be in accordance with the laws of Islam. They further lay stress on the disorders which took place in the country under the late constitutional régime, when the form of Assembly was not suited to the people.

It is evident that the Council whose establishment His Majesty announced to the two dragomans on Saturday is the Assembly contemplated.

[41877]

No. 276.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 30.)*

(No. 407.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 30, 1908.

PROTECTION of subjects of Bahrein. Your telegram No. 100 of the 16th May last.

I have received from the Minister for Foreign Affairs the draft of an amended note which, subject to the concurrence of the Grand Vizier, his Highness proposes to send me. The only passage to which exception can be taken is the following: "if the previous notes from the Minister for Foreign Affairs in regard to Bahrein and its inhabitants are referred to the situation in that place, and the arguments of the Persian Government will be quite clear to you."

Ala-es-Sultaneh has had considerable difficulty in getting a predecessor's note amended, and I doubt that we shall be able to get anything more satisfactory from the Persian Government unless the general question is raised, though it might be possible to get the words "situation in that place" omitted.

I request that I may have an early reply as to whether I may accept the note with or without this omission.

I should put in afterwards, as an implicit reaffirmation of our right, another Bahreini claim which I have to present.

[41752]

No. 277.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 629.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, November 30, 1908.

YOUR Excellency should inquire of M. Isvolsky whether he shares the views of His Majesty's Government in the following matter:—

We consider that the note which Sir G. Barclay and his Russian colleague have received from the Persian Government (see Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 406 of the 30th instant) should not be left unanswered. Supposing that the Medjliss which the Shah has promised proved to be identical with the Council, respecting the appointment of which the Legation dragomans were informed two days ago, it is improbable that quiet will be restored or the nation contented with the non-elective basis of the Assembly.

His Majesty's Government consider that it would be well to give an intimation to this effect, and that the Shah should give orders to the said Council that a new Electoral Law be drafted without further delay.

[41466]

No. 278.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.*

(No. 467.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, November 30, 1908.

THE situation in Azerbaijan.

With reference to Sir A. Nicolson's suggestion of approaching the Committee of Union and Progress (see his telegram No. 274 of the 27th instant), do you think we could suggest to the Young Turks that they should support the policy of non-intervention by a declaration that they have no intention of interfering in Persian affairs? They would be quite justified in this course in view of the fact that Russia, in spite of great provocation, has refrained from intervening in any way.

[41618]

No. 279.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 334.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, November 30, 1908.

IN reply to your telegrams No. 401 of the 27th instant and No. 403 of the 28th instant respecting the situation at Tabreez and the reported presence of German officers there, the following is the purport of various reports on which Russian suspicions are founded:—

1. About the middle of last month a German Captain arrived. His name was Gottfried Stewer.

The town is being mapped by two of his compatriots, and it is anticipated that two others will supervise the construction of fortifications. The Nationalists are being supplied along the Turco-Persian frontier with money and war material by the Germans.

2. Another report is to the effect that fortifications are being constructed under the supervision of three Turkish and two German officers.

3. Shunemann is the individual in question. The account from His Majesty's Consul-General is borne out, and, in addition, it is stated that German Minister employs him as a secret agent.

4. A Turkish Pasha, Ibrahim by name, is expected, and Sattar Khan is receiving help from an officer of the garrison at Trezibond. The latter is Mahmoud Bey.

5. Two engineers of German nationality are now in Oumerhis, a suburb of the town. They are engaged in constructing fortifications.

6. At Constantinople inquiries have been instituted respecting M. Anders, who is the subject of this report.



[41446]

No. 280.

*Memorandum communicated to Count Benckendorff, November 30, 1908.*

SIR E. GREY presents his compliments to the Russian Ambassador, and, with reference to the communication made by his Excellency on the 24th instant respecting the alleged presence of foreign officers at Tabreez in the interests of the Nationalists, has the honour to state that a telegram, dated the 27th instant, has been received from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran on the subject.

Sir G. Barclay reports that, according to information received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, one of the supposed German officers is a German named Schunamann. He is a carpenter who was for some years head of the industrial school attached to the German orphanage at Khoi, and he arrived at Tabreez a considerable time ago to set up a furniture shop. Latterly he has acted for the German Arslan Company to settle their affairs.

The second supposed officer is the son of a shareholder in the above Company, and he acts as the assistant of Herr Schunamann.

So far as His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez can ascertain the persons in question have no technical knowledge, and Herr Schunamann recently left for Khoi to wind up his affairs there.

The Turkish Consul-General at Tabreez emphatically denies the presence of any Turkish officer, nor is Mr. Wratislaw, His Majesty's Consul-General, able to hear of any.

Sir G. Barclay suggests that if M. Anders is mentioned as having been at Tabreez, inquiry at Constantinople would not improbably show that he has not left his post at the German Embassy.

*Foreign Office, November 30, 1908.*

[42021]

No. 281.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 1.)*

(No. 280.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 1, 1908.*

SHAH and Constitution. Please refer to your telegram No. 629, dated yesterday. According to information received from the Russian Chargé d'Affaires by M. Isvolsky, the proceedings of the projected Council have already begun, and the preparation of an Electoral Law is to be their first occupation. M. Sabline and Sir G. Barclay have, according to the former, agreed to do all in their power to expedite this, while observing an expectant attitude.

In M. Isvolsky's view, these circumstances might possibly render it unnecessary for the two Governments to make further representations to the Shah at present; but I explained to his Excellency that an elective basis was absolutely essential to the new Assembly, even if the franchise were somewhat more limited than that on which the last Medjliss was elected; no Council or other body consisting solely of the Shah's nominees could be accepted. As, however, the two Representatives in Tehran recommended a waiting attitude until it could be seen how the present Council worked, I said I would communicate with you again by telegraph. In any case the Electoral Law should be prepared by the Council with all possible despatch. On my observing that the Shah's assurances inspired me with no confidence whatever in his sincerity, M. Isvolsky agreed that his conduct was unsatisfactory; but he insisted that the only alternative to the present Shah was complete anarchy, as there was no one to take his place. We had therefore to make the best we could of him.

[42022]

No. 282.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 1.)*

(No. 281.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 1, 1908.*

TABREEZ. My telegram No. 274 of the 27th ultimo.

I was informed to-day by M. Isvolsky that a telegram from the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs had been communicated to him by the Turkish Ambassador. The

Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs stated that the medals sent to Tabreez had been dispatched by Persian sympathizers with Sattar Khan's movement resident at Constantinople. The Turkish Government disclaimed any desire to interfere in the internal affairs of Persia in any way. M. Isvolsky may remain satisfied with this assurance from the Ottoman Government. He did not refer to his recent suggestion that the Committee of Union and Progress should be approached on the subject, and I therefore refrained from recurring to the proposal.

M. Isvolsky seemed to take a calmer view of the situation at Tabreez than he has done on former occasions.

[42017]

No. 283.

*Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 1.)*

(No. 409.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Constantinople, December 1, 1908.*

YOUNG Turks and Persian Nationalists in Azerbaijan.

I learn from Tewfik Pasha that he has sent instructions to the authorities on the frontier in the Vilayet of Van, as well as to the Turkish Consul at Tabreez, to be careful not to intervene in the internal affairs of Persia.

Seeing that the Committee of Union and Progress is an occult body, the responsible Head of which is not even known, and with which I can have no direct dealings, it is not possible for me, I think, to obtain a declaration from them. But I have no knowledge of the Committee having any representatives in Tabreez.

If possible, it would be as well to obtain direct evidence from an independent source as to the emissaries' action there, and perhaps Mr. Wratislaw might be able to furnish the names of the representatives there.

[42004]

No. 284.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 1.)*

(No. 408.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 1, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution: St. Petersburg telegram No. 274 which was repeated to me in your telegram No. 332 of the 30th ultimo.

The members of the new Council of Notables are ignorant and reactionary with the exception of one or two who are unwilling to attend; in fact the composition of the body is unsatisfactory and clearly shows that the Shah is as far as ever from realizing the necessity of a reformed régime. Unless we can induce the Shah to add to the Council some men of more enlightened and liberal views, I fear it would be useless to attempt to utilize it as a step towards the re-establishment of an elective Assembly. With the close co-operation of the two Legations it might be possible to persuade the Shah to appoint such men, but they would be afraid of the opposition of the Court party unless we insured them against persecution, and in any case it would take time to secure their appointment.

The only way of promptly bringing the Shah to reason appears to me that suggested in my telegram No. 394 of the 23rd ultimo, and, in view of His Majesty's present attitude, the possibility of having to put such a threat into execution cannot be ignored, and I quite realize the objections there are to doing so.

The gravity of the Tabreez situation is meanwhile increasing. For though I do not attach importance to the alleged assistance from Germany and Turkey, about which I have no information excepting from M. de Hartwig, yet there are numbers of Caucasian revolutionaries continuing to arrive at Tabreez, and these bid fair to swamp the constitutionalist character of the movement.



[42005]

No. 285.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 1.)*

(No. 409.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 1, 1908.*

TABREEZ situation. I have received following telegram, No. 76, from Mr. Consul-General Wratislaw :—

“The troops of the Nationalist party have returned to Tabreez having been driven out of Maraga. Two leaders are in prison here on account of their bad conduct, which had brought about popular rising against them.”

[42006]

No. 286.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 1.)*

(No. 410.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 1, 1908.*

RUSSIAN troops on Persian frontier.

In a telegram No. 77 dated to-day His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez reports the withdrawal from Julfa of 500 Russian troops.

[42014]

No. 287.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 1.)*

(No. 411.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 1, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution: My telegram No. 400 of the 25th ultimo.

The Rescript of the 22nd ultimo has to-day been posted all over the town, notwithstanding the assurances given by command of the Shah to the two representatives by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The Russian Chargé d'Affaires and I are energetically pressing that it may be withdrawn without delay.

[42015]

No. 288.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 1.)*

(No. 412.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 1, 1908.*

SITUATION. I hear on reliable authority that the Secret Societies are at work, and there are indications that the effervescence in Tehran is increasing.

To-day a numerous signed Petition in favour of the Constitution, which is, I believe, to be followed by others of the same kind, was presented to the Legations.

[39454]

No. 289.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 1, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 11th ultimo respecting the suggestions made by His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire in his despatch of the 6th June, 1908, regarding the general political situation in the Persian Gulf.

#### 1. Visit of Major Cox to Tehran.

Sir E. Grey concurs in the proposal that Major Cox should be authorized, as soon as a suitable opportunity occurs for leaving the Gulf, to proceed to Tehran.

[42008]

No. 288\*.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 1.)*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 1, 1908.*

TABREEZ situation.

With reference to my telegram No. 408 of to-day, I hear from an individual who has passed recently along the Julfa road that he saw four waggon-loads of Russian revolutionaries *en route* for Tabreez.

It is not easy to believe that it is beyond the power of the authorities of the Caucasus to prevent their crossing the frontier.

[1622]

2 U<sup>a</sup>



2. *British and Russian Consular Establishments.*

Sir E. Grey concurs in the view that consideration of this subject in general should be deferred as proposed. He is, however, not disposed to take any action in regard to the transfer of M. Ovsenko for the present.

3. *The immediate Appointment of a British Vice-Consul at Lingah.*

Sir E. Grey concurs that such an appointment is desirable, and he is about to have the matter brought before the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury.

4. *Policing the Trade Routes.*

Sir E. Grey concurs in the views of Lord Morley.

5. *Customs Administration.*

Sir E. Grey agrees that no action is at present called for.

6. *Inadequacy of the present Naval Arrangements in the Gulf.*

Sir E. Grey considers that it would be expedient to await, as proposed, the results of the Brussels Conference on the Arms Traffic and of the negotiations with France in regard to Muscat.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) W. LANGLEY.

[41077]

No. 290.

*Foreign Office to Mr. D'Arcy.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 1, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to inform you that the question whether or not it is necessary to retain the Indian guard in the neighbourhood of Ahwaz to protect the employes and operations of your Syndicate has recently formed the subject of communications with His Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

I understood from you, when I last had the pleasure of seeing you, that in your opinion and in view of the tranquillity prevailing in the district, the presence of the guard was no longer necessary, but that you wished certain explanations to be given to the Bakhtians of the reason for its withdrawal, and a statement to be made as to its possible return in the event of disturbance.

His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, Lieutenant Wilson, who is the officer in charge of the guard, and your local Manager are inclined to consider, on the whole, that the retention of the guard is advisable.

Lieutenant Wilson is writing to explain his reasons for holding this view, and the arrival of his letter will be awaited.

In the meantime, I am to inform you that, as the retention of the guard in question is only called for, if at all, in the interests of your Syndicate, Sir E. Grey considers that the expense involved cannot properly be further charged to public funds, and that it should accordingly be defrayed by your Board.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) CHARLES HARDINGE.



[42040]

No. 291.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 2.)*

Sir,

*India Office, December 1, 1908.*

IN reply to your letter dated the 21st November, 1908, as to the appointment of a Military Attaché at Meshed, I am directed to inclose copy of a telegram sent to the Government of India on the subject.

The question of the continuance of the appointment having now been settled, Viscount Morley would be glad to receive an expression of the views of Secretary Sir E. Grey regarding its status, as requested in the letter from this Department dated the 17th March last.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 291.

*Viscount Morley to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*India Office, November 28, 1908.*

PLEASE refer to your telegram dated the 21st September. Appointment of Military Attaché, Meshed, is sanctioned, with effect from the 21st October, 1908, for two years. At the end of that period it will be subject to reconsideration. Treasury agree that a moiety of the cost shall be borne by British revenues.

[42046]

No. 292.

*Board of Trade to Foreign Office.—(Received December 2.)*

Sir,

*Board of Trade, December 1, 1908.*

I AM directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th November, stating that a telegram, dated the 23rd November, had been received from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, to the effect that the Mouin-utt-Tijjah claims that under the Firman of 1904 the Island of Sirri is included in the Concession granted to him by the Persian Government, adding that Sir E. Grey would be glad to receive the observations of the Board of Trade on the situation which had arisen, more especially as to whether any further steps could be taken to expedite an agreement with regard to the export of oxide from the Island of Hormuz.

In reply I am to say that in view of the attitude adopted by Mr. Strick at his recent interviews with the Department—notes of which have been sent to the Foreign Office—and also having regard to the result of the more recent interview between Mr. Strick and Mr. Ellinger, to which Mr. Ellinger refers in his letter of the 20th November, a copy of which is inclosed, the Board are of opinion that it is not possible at the present time to induce Mr. Strick to enter into a contract with the Mouin, through Mr. Ellinger, for the purchase of oxide in the Island of Hormuz, unless the Mouin is prepared to meet some of the objections raised by Mr. Strick to the terms which have been offered to him. Mr. Strick appears to think that there is more Hormuz oxide available for sale than can be marketed for some time, and that, accordingly, the Mouin is not in a position to drive a hard bargain, and may presently be obliged to modify his proposals. Mr. Strick has also expressed some doubts as to whether the quality of the Hormuz oxide is as good now as it was. In the meantime, as the Foreign Office are aware, Mr. Strick is making inquiries as to the possibility of securing Concessions for working oxide on other islands in the Gulf, doubtless with the object of entering into competition with Hormuz, should he not be able to come to terms with the Mouin.

The Board consider that it would be very desirable if Mr. Strick made a contract for the purchase of Hormuz oxide, because, among other reasons, it would result in the

freight being secured for British vessels, a matter of considerable importance in view of the competition of the Hamburg—Amerika Line in the Gulf. But, if this is not possible, the Board think that should oxide of a somewhat similar quality be found on other islands in the Gulf, the next best course would be for Mr. Strick to obtain Concessions there, and thus ensure that a monopoly of Persian Gulf oxide does not fall into foreign hands. The Board recognize that in certain circumstances it may not be possible for Mr. Strick to secure a concession on the Island of Sirri, but one advantage in his doing so would be that the oxide would always be carried in British vessels.

With regard to the formation of a British Company for the purchase of oxide from Hormuz, the Board think that there would be advantages in such a course, because the trade would then be carried on in British interests for a considerable period. They are, however, of opinion that Mr. Ellinger will not be successful in getting up a Company in this country, unless the recent scheme suggested by the Mouin is considerably modified, and, even if more reasonable terms were offered by the Mouin, the Board think that, if Mr. Strick were hostile to the promotion of a Company, his active opposition might make its flotation very difficult, if not impossible. In their opinion Mr. Strick is more likely to enter into a contract with the Mouin, than to take part in the promotion of a Company.

With regard to the telegram dated the 23rd November which has been received from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, assuming that the Firman of 1904 does in fact include the Island of Sirri, then it would appear that the Mouin has a bad title, at any rate to that part of the Concession, as the Persian Government had no power to grant it, the island being claimed by the Sheikh of Shargah, who is under British protection, and the British Government never having acquiesced in the Persian claim, but, on the contrary, having protested against the Persian occupation of the island in 1888. The Board presume that the Persian Government is hardly likely to take up the position that they had the right to grant a Concession of Sirri in 1904 to the Mouin.

Accordingly, the Mouin may have a cause of complaint against the Persian Government, but not against His Majesty's Government, and having regard to the history of the case, if the Persian Government have definitely granted this Concession to the Mouin it would appear that His Majesty's Government have a cause of complaint against the Persian Government. But it is difficult to understand how the Mouin could regard the proposed action of His Majesty's Government as regards Sirri as hostile, if he is fully aware of the attitude His Majesty's Government have always taken up with reference to the disputed territorial ownership. The case would, of course, be different if the Mouin was under the *bond fide* belief that the Island of Sirri is rightfully included in his Concession, and that, notwithstanding this, His Majesty's Government is ignoring his title and treating the Persian Government as lawfully entitled to grant a Concession for working the oxide on Sirri, and perhaps pressing for a Concession to be given by that Government to a British subject for the express purpose of injuring the Mouin's interests on Hormuz.

The Board assume, however, that the position of His Majesty's Government in this matter will be fully explained to the Mouin, and they suggest, for Sir E. Grey's consideration, that he might also be informed of the assistance which has frequently been given by His Majesty's Government to his agent, Mr. Ellinger, in connection with his negotiations with Mr. Strick and in his efforts to form a Company, and that this assistance will be continued.

I am to add that, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, the Board see no reason why the general line of action proposed with reference to Sirri should be modified, unless it transpires that the Persian Government claim a title to the island, and have granted a Concession to the Mouin on that basis. The Board are, however, of opinion that it would be desirable that any applicant who seeks the approval of His Majesty's Government for a Concession for working oxide on the Island of Sirri should be bound to work it under certain conditions to be agreed to by His Majesty's Government, and that it should be understood that if such conditions are not complied with during the continuance of the Concession, His Majesty's Government would demand its revocation, and also raise the question as to the territorial status of the island.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) ARTHUR WILSON FOX.



Inclosure in No. 292.

*Mr. Ellinger to Board of Trade.*

Dear Mr. Wilson Fox, 28, Oxford Street, Manchester, November 20, 1908.  
I REGRET to hear that you are confined to the house for some time, and trust the rest may completely restore you.

I saw Mr. Strick last week in reference to the contract for the oxide, but I am sorry to say that I could make no progress.

Mr. Strick refused to contract on the terms which he accepted in August last, and on being asked to state on what terms he would contract he gave me to understand that in his opinion his best policy is to sit still and wait until the Mouin is in such a position that Mr. Strick can dictate to him his own terms. He also informed me that one of the conditions of any future contract must give him the right to terminate the contract at any time and should the quality of the oxide deteriorate. I am of the opinion that the Mouin will not accept any contract containing this condition, nor do I see any reason to suppose that any necessity will arise for him to allow Mr. Strick to dictate to him his own terms for a new oxide contract. Probably when Mr. Strick realizes this in course of time he will become more reasonable, and in the meantime we have again written to the Mouin, strongly urging upon him the advisability of making reasonable terms on which a Company could be formed, or, failing this, of concluding a contract of some years' duration.

In accordance with a suggestion made by Sir Richmond Ritchie in our last interview, we have pointed out to the Mouin that, although he can rely upon the absolute protection of his property in the event of a Company being formed, and upon the benevolent protection of the British Government during the currency of a *bond fide* contract, he cannot count upon our being able to induce His Majesty's Government to protect him, should the necessity arise, if we base our application upon a contract made after the urgency has arisen, and having the appearance of being made for the purpose of securing this protection. We are afraid that there is nothing more to be done at the moment, and regret that your kind offices and your trouble have not had a more satisfactory result.

Faithfully yours,  
(Signed) M. ELLINGER.

[42113]

No. 293.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 2.)*

(No. 413.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 2, 1908.*

I THOUGHT it well to inquire of Mr. Consul-General Wratislaw as to whether the Tabreezis were likely to proclaim their autonomy, and also how far it was to be expected that the re-establishment of the constitutional régime would revive their loyalty, provided Tabreez were given a Governor to its taste and were included in the electoral law.

I have now received a reply to the effect that "loyalty" is probably incompatible with the feelings of the people of Tabreez towards the Shah, but it is likely that the great majority, in order to end the present situation, would welcome the terms mentioned. They fear for the future, and the extreme party would probably have to fall into line.

There would be a demand, however, for British or Russian effective guarantee of Constitution and amnesty, and the Tabreezis would not consent to disarm, at any rate before seeing how the new régime worked.

A reconciliation will be more difficult the longer the situation lasts. The good offices of the two Powers seem almost indispensable in order to bring about such a reconciliation.

A proclamation of autonomy might possibly follow a fresh defeat of the Shah's forces if they attack again, but Mr. Wratislaw does not think there is any immediate fear of such a development. The extremists who keep on coming in from the Caucasus are the grave symptom of the situation.

[42087]

No. 294.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 2.)*

(No. 414.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 2, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution.

In continuation of my telegram No. 411 of yesterday's date, I have received a message from the Shah that the placarding of his answer to the Ulema was done entirely without his knowledge, and that he is much vexed about it. His Majesty has commanded that the placard shall be torn down and destroyed.

The Shah thinks that the posting of the document was done by the clergy, but as some subordinate officials may also have been responsible His Majesty has ordered the Governor of Tehran to reprimand any persons found to be implicated.

His Majesty repeats the assurances which Ala-es-Sultaneh conveyed to me last Wednesday (see my telegram No. 400 of the 25th instant).

[42123]

No. 295.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 2.)*

(No. 415.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 2, 1908.*

SITUATION in Meshed and Astrabad.

His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Meshed reports riots there in favour of the Constitution; the bazaar is closed.

The Russian Legation has received the same news in regard to Astrabad.

[42017]

No. 296.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.*

(No. 471.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 2, 1908.*

THE situation actually prevailing in Azerbaijan presents considerable difficulties, and it would be well for your Excellency to explain them thoroughly to the Grand Vizier, although it may be difficult, as you point out in your telegram No. 409 of to-day's date, to obtain from the Committee of Union and Progress any assurance respecting the state of affairs in Tabreez.

The facts to be explained to his Highness are these:—

In Persia the Russian Government have practised great self-restraint, and have adhered with loyalty to the policy of non-intervention, which has been emphatically and consistently advocated by His Majesty's Government from the outset.

Russia has, moreover, carried out this policy in spite of the fact that the lawlessness which has prevailed on her own frontier and occasioned heavy loss both to her enterprise and trade has for three months past exposed her to great provocation.

Intervention on the part of Russia is a matter that every one should wish to obviate, but if foreign influences were to encourage a movement which she regarded as inimical to her interests, it would not be easy to prevent her from taking action.

Any steps either at Constantinople or anywhere else which might be interpreted as foreign influence at Tabreez are obviously to be deprecated, and we therefore hope earnestly that the Sublime Porte will do their utmost to discourage and prevent such measures.

[41877]

No. 297.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 2, 1908.*

WITH reference to your letter of the 13th May last, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, the accompanying copy of a telegram from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran respecting the claims of the Persian Government to sovereignty over the Island of Bahrein.\*

\* No. 276.

[1622]

2 Y



Sir E. Grey proposes, subject to the concurrence of Lord Morley, to authorize Sir G. Barclay to accept the amended note of the Persian Government, but only with the omission which is indicated.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[42177]

No. 298.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 3.)*

Sir,  
I AM directed by Viscount Morley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 24th ultimo respecting the claim now put forward by the Moin-ut-Tujar that the Island of Sirri is covered by the general terms of the Firman from the Persian Government under which he at present exploits the oxide on Hormuz Island.

As far as Lord Morley is aware, there is no copy of the Firman on record in this country. He would suggest that His Majesty's Minister at Tehran might be instructed to procure a copy, and to report upon the precise scope of the Concession granted to the Moin.

If Sirri is not expressly covered by the terms of the Firman, Lord Morley would suggest that the Moin, and, if necessary, the Persian Government, should be informed that no interpretation of the Concession which would give the Moin the right of working oxide on that island can be recognized by His Majesty's Government. In this case our attitude towards the application of Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co. would not necessarily require modification. It is presumed that the assurances given by the firm may be regarded as adequate, and that it is not necessary to impose further conditions upon them. It seems desirable, however, in view of possible contingencies in the future, to clear up the point raised in my letter of the 4th ultimo as to the period for which the Concession, if granted to the firm, will run.

Should it appear, on the other hand, that Sirri is expressly included in the Moin's Concession, Lord Morley, as at present advised, considers the best course would be to request the Persian Government to amend the terms of the Firman, coupled with an intimation on the lines approved, in respect of the communication to be addressed to them regarding Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co.'s application, to the effect that any action taken on the island by the Moin under the Firman would lead to an assertion by His Majesty's Government of the claims of the Jowasmi Chief.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[42213]

No. 299.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 3.)*

(No. 282.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 3, 1908.*

SITUATION in Province of Azerbaijan.

Sir G. Barclay's telegram of the 1st instant.

I am convinced that the Russian Government would gladly cut off all communication between the Caucasus and the Province of Azerbaijan if they were in a position to do so effectively. If Sir G. Barclay is sure that the person who informed him about the four waggon-loads of revolutionaries is quite trustworthy, I would mention the incident to M. Isvolsky.

I have been assured frequently, both by M. Isvolsky and by M. Tcharykoff, that the Russian Government would have no uneasiness about the Tabreez movement if it were conducted by Persians alone for the object of obtaining a Constitution, but they have impressed on me continually that the active and moving spirits of the disturbance are some hundreds of desperate Russian revolutionaries, who aim at something far beyond Constitutions, &c. The real anxiety of the Russian Government is attributable to this. In the present state of affairs in Europe it is evident that an entanglement in Persia and serious troubles on her frontiers and within her own borders are the very last things which Russia would desire.

[42245]

No. 300.

*Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 3.)*

(No. 410.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.

*Constantinople, December 3, 1908.*

THE Grand Vizier will caution the Young Turk Committee, though he does not believe they have any emissaries in Tabreez (reference your telegram No. 471 of the 2nd instant) in communication with Nationalists.

This view is shared by my Russian colleague, who, however, complains of the Turkish Consul-General's attitude. Minister for Foreign Affairs has given the same assurances to the Russian Ambassador as he gave to me (see my telegram No. 409 of the 1st instant).

[42201]

No. 301.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 3.)*

(No. 416.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 3, 1908.*

TURKISH assistance to Nationalists at Tabreez. Constantinople telegram No. 409.

His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez reports in a telegram No. 78 dated yesterday, that Sattar Khan is in communication with the Persian Committee at Constantinople, and that it is probable that through them he is also in touch with the Young Turks. Mr. Wratislaw has not heard of any Pan-Islamic emissaries in Tabreez, and if there are any they must be working on a very limited scale, otherwise it would be generally known. He adds that he hears on good authority that the Turkish Consul-General has promised Nationalist leaders asylum in case of need in the Turkish Consulate-General, and he is showing sympathy with their cause.

[42209]

No. 302.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 3.)*

(No. 417.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 3, 1908.*

SIRRI oxide. Referring to my telegram No. 393 of the 23rd ultimo:  
Eftekhar-ut-Tujar, the representative of Hadji Ali Akbar and Co., has applied for Concession to the Persian Government. I am presenting our note to the Persian Government to-day, as I do not think that in these circumstances it should be further delayed.

[42226]

No. 303.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 3.)*

(No. 418.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 3, 1908.*

SITUATION at Meshed. My telegram No. 415 of the 2nd instant.  
A Memorial has been forwarded to His Majesty's Acting Consul-General by the Nationalists at Meshed for transmission to the Shah. The Memorial is to the effect that the previous petitions to His Majesty against the Constitution were fabrications, and adds that the people of Khorossan will, if necessary, give their lives in obedience to their spiritual leaders.

The Meshed movement is quite likely to react here, and to further increase the popular agitation. It is due to the influence of the clergy, and therefore possesses particular importance.



[42046]

No. 304.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 339.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 3, 1908.*

SEE Mr. Marling's telegram No. 308 of the 26th October, 1907, and your telegram No. 393 of the 23rd ultimo: Sirri oxide.

To float a Company in England for the purpose of working the Hormuz mines, it would be necessary to obtain an authentic copy of the Firman which was issued in 1904. This you should try to get from the Persian Government or from the Moin, and report substance of it by telegram. It should be made clear to the Moin that without this document the formation of a Company in this country would be impossible.

[42315]

No. 305.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 4.)*

Sir,

*India Office, December 2, 1908.*

IN reply to your letter of the 13th October, 1908, respecting the inquiries of Messrs. F. C. Strick and Co., Limited, as to mining Concessions in the Islands of Sirri, Little Tamb, and Nabiyyu Farur, I am directed by Viscount Morley to transmit herewith, to be laid before the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy on the subject.

Lord Morley concurs generally in Sir E. Grey's views as expressed in your letter under reply.

As regards Sirri, the issue is complicated by the claim recently made by the Moin-ut-Tujjar, that the island is covered by the Firman from the Persian Government under which he mines oxide on Hormuz. A separate communication on this point is being addressed to you in reply to your letter of the 24th November, 1908.

As regards Nabiyyu Farur, over which Persian sovereignty cannot apparently be disputed, it seems not impossible that the Moin may claim that this island also is included in the terms of his Concession. If such a claim can be established, it would be impracticable to support an application by Messrs. Strick, and it seems desirable to ascertain the precise terms of the Moin's Concession before encouraging the firm to approach the Persian authorities.

With regard to Little Tamb, Lord Morley concurs in the view that the island may be regarded as belonging to the Sheikh of Shargah. But the Government of India suggest that, before Messrs. Strick are authorized to approach the Resident at Bushire with a view to obtaining a Concession from the Sheikh, an examination might be made of the Islands of Dalmah, Sir Abu Nuair, and Halul, to ascertain whether they contain deposits of oxide.

There appears to be no doubt that Dalmah, as stated by the Government of India, is under the Trucial Chief of Abu Dhabbi, while Sir Abu Nuair, according to information given on p. 1292 of the recently received geographical and statistical volume of the "Persian Gulf Gazetteer," belongs to the Sheikh of Shargah. The status of Halul, on the other hand, presents some difficulty. The papers forwarded with the letter from this office, dated the 2nd October, 1906, show that the island\* (which is uninhabited) has no definite owner, but that any assertion of rights beyond the present customary usage of the island by Arabs from Bahrein, the Trucial Coast, and El Katr, might lead to claims being raised by the El Katr Sheikh to which the Turkish Government might possibly lend their support.

Lord Morley would suggest, for Sir E. Grey's consideration, that before Messrs. Strick formulate their demands for a Concession on Little Tamb, their attention should be drawn to the possibility of oxide deposits being found on the Islands of Dalmah and Sir Abu Nuair. But as regards Halul, he doubts whether it would be expedient at present to take any action that might possibly give rise to a discussion as to the status of that island.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

\* "Persian Gulf Gazetteer," Geographical and Statistical Volume, p. 617.

Inclosure in No. 305.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*November 24, 1908.*

PLEASE refer to your telegram of the 20th ultimo regarding Concessions for mining oxide in the Persian Gulf. Telegram from Resident, Bushire, states that flag has been flown on Greater Tamb Island, but not on Little Tamb Island, by Sheikh of Shargah. We can, in his opinion, claim that ownership of former island implies that of latter. We concur in this view. In this case procedure you suggest may suitably be followed. Ownership of Little Farur will, on the same analogy, follow that of parent island, which belongs to Persia; and it will presumably be necessary for Strick to apply for Concession to the Persian Government. Resident suggests that, before question of ownership of these two islands is raised, deposits on Halul, Sir Abu Nuair, and Dalmah Island, under Abu Dhabbi, might be examined. There was suspicion (see our telegram of the 22nd August, 1906) that designs on latter island were harboured by Germans. If it is thought desirable Major Cox's suggestion might be made to Strick. It is not anticipated that any awkward question need be raised by procedure on lines suggested in regard to Little Tamb Island and Little Farur.

[42345]

No. 306.

*Mr. M. Ellinger to Foreign Office.—(Received December 4.)*

"Pilbarra," Ornan Road, Hampstead,  
December 3, 1908.

Sir,

HORMUZ Concession.

I understand that an application has been made to the Persian Government by Messrs. Malcolm, of Bushire, and Haji Ali Akbar and Co., of Persia and London, for the grant of a Concession to mine oxide in the Island of Sirri, and that the British Minister at Tehran has been informed that His Majesty's Government has no objections, under certain conditions, to the grant by the Persian Government of such a Concession to the firms named.

I am informed by the Muin-ut-Tujjar that the Concession which he holds from the Persian Government regarding Hormuz includes all the rights to mine oxide in the Island of Sirri, and that he has shown his firman to the British Legation in Tehran.

If this be so, it would appear that the grant by the Persian Government of the Concession asked for by Messrs. Malcolm and Haji Ali Akbar and Co. would involve the withdrawal or cancellation of part of the Concession which the Muin-ut-Tujjar already holds, and I shall be glad to learn if you can see your way to inform the British Minister at Tehran that under these circumstances any application to the Persian Government by the parties named, or others, for a Concession to mine oxide in the Island of Sirri should be opposed.

Yours faithfully,  
(Signed) M. ELLINGER.

[42369]

No. 307.

*Mr. M. Ellinger to Foreign Office.—(Received December 4.)*

"Pilbarra," Ornan Road, Hampstead,  
December 4, 1908.

Sir,

WITH reference to my yesterday's conversation with Mr. Maxwell, I now beg to inform you that I have to-day signed, on behalf of my firm as agents for the Muin-ut-Tujjar, a three years' contract for the sale of the Hormuz oxide to Messrs. Andrew Weir and Co., of 6, Lloyd's Avenue, E.C.

I request you to consider this information as private and confidential, as it would not be in the interest of the concerned that the fact becomes known to Messrs. Frank C. Strick and Co., Limited.

Yours faithfully,  
(Signed) M. ELLINGER.

[1622]

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[42375]

No. 308.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 4.)*

(No. 284.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 4, 1908.*

M. SABLNE has telegraphed to M. Isvolsky to the effect that his Austrian colleague is anxious that a meeting of the foreign Representatives in Tehran (excepting those of Russia and Great Britain) should be held, its object being to decide what measures could be adopted to indicate that the constitutional movement in Persia commands their sympathy. The Austrian and other Legations had, according to the information given to M. Sabline by M. Rosthorn, received a number of Petitions asking for the restoration of the constitutional régime, and M. Rosthorn feared that the Persian public might think their wishes in this respect were a matter of indifference to him and his colleagues unless some notice were taken of these Petitions. He also said that if Sir G. Barclay and M. Sabline had any objection to such a meeting he would not convoke it, but the position of the Austrian and other Legations would, in that case, be very awkward.

Any intervention of other Representatives seems to M. Isvolsky extremely undesirable in present circumstances. Count Benckendorff has been instructed by telegraph to inquire what view you take of the matter.

[42439]

No. 309.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 5.)*

(No. 419.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 5, 1908.*

SITUATION at Meshed. My telegram No. 418 of yesterday's date. The Nationalists at Meshed have seized the telegraph office. The movement appears to be gaining ground.

[42501]

No. 310.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 5.)*

(No. 420.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 5, 1908.*

CAUCASIAN revolutionaries in Azerbaijan. Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 282, which was repeated to me in your telegram No. 341 of yesterday.

It was not my intention to impute blame to the Russian Government, who, I have no doubt, are as anxious as we are not to allow the situation in Azerbaijan to assume a wider field.

Following paragraph is very confidential:—

I have been given to understand both by M. de Hartwig and the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, and I believe they have said as much to their Government, that the Governor-General of the Caucasus might have been more energetic in preventing revolutionaries crossing the frontier.

Any reconciliation between the Shah and the people of Azerbaijan will be made the more difficult the stronger the extremist element becomes, and it is in every way desirable that the authorities of the Caucasus should use every effort to prevent that element growing.

I have promised to treat the information I received in regard to the waggon-loads as private. I believe it to be trustworthy.

[42517]

No. 311.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 6.)*

(No. 286.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 6, 1908.*

VISIT of Persian Special Envoy to St. Petersburg.

I was informed yesterday by M. Isvolsky that, in spite of the Russian Govern-

ment's statement that the Emperor did not desire to receive any condolences on the death of the Grand Duke Alexis, the Special Envoy's visit would take place.

The reply of the Persian Government had been to the effect that they still desired to send him, and that he would be the bearer of an important letter to the Emperor from the Shah.

[42511]

No. 312.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 6.)*

(No. 421.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 6, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution. Telegram No. 284 from Sir A. Nicolson, which was repeated to me in your telegram No. 342 of yesterday.

The doyen has let me know through a third party that he had some such plan for supporting the Russian and His Majesty's Legations in their representations to the Shah. I have replied through the same channel that in my opinion the proposed step was quite unnecessary.

When M. Sabline was approached by the Austrian Minister he gave him no encouragement.

Without knowing that the step would not be unwelcome to M. Sabline and me, at least three out of the six Representatives concerned would not in any case join.

[42546]

No. 313.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 7.)*

(No. 536.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 23, 1908.*

I COMMUNICATED to M. Isvolsky yesterday the substance of Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 386 of the 19th instant in regard to the joint representation which he suggested should be made to the Shah through the intermediary of the Dragomans of the Russian and British Legations for the purpose of inducing His Majesty to fulfil his promises and enact a Constitution; and I asked his Excellency if he would kindly send the necessary instructions to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires to co-operate with his British colleague. M. Isvolsky explained to me that he had received a very similar telegram from M. Sabline, and that he had already sent instructions in the sense desired.

M. Isvolsky observed that there were two distinct questions regarding Persia, one in respect to the grant of a Constitution, convocation of an Assembly, &c., and the other the disturbed condition of the Province of Azerbaijan.

As regards the first question, he would, of course, heartily co-operate with His Majesty's Government in urging upon the Shah the fulfilment of his promises, though he himself had doubts if the Assembly would prove of much avail in remedying the chaotic condition into which Persia had fallen. It would have no authority, and would be hampered continually by the reactionaries, and would probably be composed of incompetent men. I told his Excellency that Sir G. Barclay, while ready to admit that the former Assembly left very much to be decided, was still of opinion that there were men capable of devising an Electoral Law suitable to the country, and which might lead to the constitution of an Assembly competent to exercise a beneficial influence over the administration of the country. In any case, it would be well to give the experiment a fair trial.

In regard to Azerbaijan, M. Isvolsky repeated what he has so frequently impressed on me; and he stated that another Russian postal station had been destroyed within 15 versts of the Russian frontier. I did not encourage him to dwell on this part of the question, but turned the conversation to other subjects.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) A. NICOLSON.



[42549]

No. 314.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 7.)*

(No. 539.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 25, 1908.*

I COMMUNICATED to M. Isvolsky yesterday the substance of your telegram No. 616 of the 23rd instant, and I read and left with him a Memorandum embodying the proposals put forward in the third and fourth paragraphs of the above-mentioned telegram.

M. Isvolsky read over the Memorandum very carefully, and remarked that it seemed to him that the proposed message to the Shah constituted in reality an intervention on behalf of one of the parties in the struggle. I told him that I could not agree with him. The Shah had undoubtedly violated his promises, and had disregarded the advice which had been urged upon him by the two Representatives, and it seemed to me that both Governments were quite justified in giving His Majesty very clearly to understand the consequences which would ensue from the action which he had thought fit to adopt.

M. Isvolsky said that he noticed that His Majesty's Government stated that the Shah had destroyed all prospect of maintaining order, and that the Constitution was the only hope of order being re-established. It seemed to him that the former statement was rather a large assumption, and that it could hardly be asserted with certainty that the proclamation of a Constitution would restore order. I pointed out to his Excellency that the original cause of the disturbances in the Azerbaijan Province had been the dissolution of the late Assembly, and it might be assumed that if a new Assembly were called into being, tranquility would be re-established in the province. If the Shah in fact decreed a Constitution and ordained elections, and if notwithstanding these measures Sattar Khan continued to pursue an independent course, it would be clear, I admitted, that he had ulterior designs, and that then the two Governments might reconsider the situation.

M. Isvolsky remarked that we spoke of the "nationalist forces"; he did not quite understand what was meant by the term "nationalist." I replied that this was a convenient form of expression for the adherents of Sattar Khan and for those who were opposed to a reactionary policy. His Excellency said that he thought "revolutionary forces" would have been a more appropriate term, as Sattar Khan was exercising an independent authority, and his men were destroying Russian postal stations, telephone communication, and generally harrying and annoying Russian subjects. He knew for a fact that he was receiving encouragement from the Young Turks, and this fact complicated matters.

I drew his Excellency's attention to your readiness to support, or even to join in, a communication to Sattar Khan, warning him of the possible consequences if disorders continued and if the lives and properties of foreign subjects were endangered. I thought that this advance on your part would have a very salutary effect both on Sattar Khan and on his Young Turkish sympathisers, if it were a fact that there were such. It would show both very clearly that His Majesty's Government recognized in certain circumstances the right of Russia to intervene, and this would surely strengthen the position of the Russian Government.

M. Isvolsky said that the proposals, which he thought were rather drastic, required most careful consideration, as they might lead to serious consequences, and he was unable to give me a reply offhand. I told him that I naturally had no desire to extort an opinion from him at once. In fact, you had intimated in your telegram to me that the situation which had been created by the issue of the Shah's rescript required careful consideration on the part of both Governments.

We then turned to other subjects, but on leaving I again expressed the hope to M. Isvolsky that he would give me a favourable reply, as I was sure that the communications to the Shah and to Sattar Khan would produce a good effect on both, and it was greatly in the interests of Russia that order should be re-established in Azerbaijan, and that co-operation to that end should be marked as a gain.

His Excellency said: "Give me time to think it all over."

I confess that I was disappointed with the attitude of M. Isvolsky, as his apparent solicitude for the feelings of the Shah seemed to me to be a little superfluous, and I had thought that he would have welcomed the offer which you had made in respect to joining in a warning to Sattar Khan. I do not know what was holding him back from promptly concurring with your suggestions, though I believe he is not convinced

that the Shah will not succeed in maintaining his position throughout Persia, and he may be unwilling to use language which may alienate His Majesty completely and dispose him to appeal elsewhere. Moreover, I know that, in view of the character of the Persians generally, he is very sceptical as to their being in any way capable of utilising representative institutions for the real benefit of their country; and, as he has occasionally good-humouredly remarked to me, he considers we are too "doctrinaire" and too apt to regard a "Constitution" as effecting, in all circumstances and in all countries, immediate and thoroughly effective remedies to all ills.

I did not mention the question of the recall of Colonel Liakhoff at our interview yesterday, as I will reserve it for the next occasion, when he will probably be in a position to give me his well-considered opinion on the whole question, and which I trust will be in accordance with your proposals.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[42553]

No. 315.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 7.)*

(No. 543.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 27, 1908.*

M. ISVOLSKY, who was dining with me last night, spoke to me in regard to the situation in Azerbaijan, and said that he was being much pressed by the Minister of Finance to take some measures for the protection of Russian interests in that province. He said that the construction of the road from Julfa to Tabreez, with its equipment, had cost about 1,000,000*l.*, and that since February last not a penny had been received from tolls. Two postal stations and several versts of telephone communication had been destroyed, and the trade was being conducted under conditions of very great difficulty, and, in fact, had almost ceased. The employés on the road had in some instances fled for their lives, and he feared that he might hear at any moment of the murder of some Russian subjects. The claims which had already been received from Russian subjects for losses incurred amounted to about 150,000*l.*, and he was being reproached for maintaining a passive attitude in face of these conditions. The question was still further complicated by the action of the Young Turks, and he could assure me as an unquestionable fact that through their emissaries in Tabreez they were encouraging Sattar Khan and his co-adjutors, the revolutionaries from the Caucasus, and were preaching the formation of a Liberal Pan-Islamic Union. The Turkish Government, he was aware, had categorically denied that they had given any encouragement to Sattar Khan, but the Committee of Union and Progress, who he appeared to consider to be more powerful and important than the Sublime Porte, were actively intervening in the affairs of Azerbaijan. He wondered if His Majesty's Government could obtain from the Committee some formal declaration that they had no intention of interfering in any way in Persian affairs, and would hold aloof from any collusion with Sattar Khan. If some such disavowal could be obtained it would greatly ease the situation, and he would be grateful if I would submit the suggestion to you.

I imagine that M. Isvolsky foresees the possibility of Russia being compelled to intervene for the protection of her interests and subjects, and is desirous of being assured beforehand that in the case of such intervention, she will not come into any kind of collision with the Young Turks. I told M. Isvolsky that I would convey his proposal to you, and I asked if he would like me at the same time to say that the Russian Government would desire our co-operation in a warning being given to Sattar Khan, as had been proposed in your telegram No. 616 of the 23rd instant. His Excellency said that he did not much like the idea of entering into any direct relations with Sattar Khan, as communications from the Consuls would have the appearance of recognizing that personage as an independent local authority; but he had suggested to the Minister of Finance to permit his employés on the road to endeavour to arrange with Sattar Khan for some security being accorded to the trade caravans. Such a procedure could not be characterized as any official intervention. Moreover, if the Russian Government were to enter into direct communication with Sattar Khan such a step would be welcomed by the Russian revolutionaries, and produce a very unfortunate effect in the Caucasus. I asked M. Isvolsky whether the destruction of the postal stations and the other hindrances placed in the way of peaceful commerce were the acts of Sattar Khan's people, or of



the Shah's forces, or of ordinary brigands. I understood M. Isvolsky to say that it was difficult to apportion the responsibility; the anarchy was general and was increasing rather than diminishing; Tabreez itself might be fairly quiet, but all the surrounding districts were in disorder.

M. Isvolsky said that now that the Shah had withdrawn his rescript, it did not appear to him necessary to make the communication which had been proposed in your telegram No. 616. I told him that the Shah could not be trusted, he wavered and changed his mind every twenty-four hours, and constant pressure would have to be exercised on him to bring him up to the point of fulfilling his promises. So far as I could gather, it appeared that even now he was merely contemplating the institution of a Council of Notables, and not a National Assembly. His Excellency said that he did not know whether a Council composed of intelligent and superior men would not be a more efficient body than a National Assembly. He was discussing the Persian situation with M. de Hartwig and others, and later on he might be in a position to state his views more definitely. Then there was the question of finance, as he understood that the want of funds was one of the chief causes of the unrest, and officials and soldiers were many months in arrear. He might be able to make some proposals on this head when he had studied the question more fully. Of course, if any advances were made, their expenditure would have to be most carefully controlled. But he did not wish to discuss this or other cognate questions now; he was merely indicating to me some impressions which he had gathered from his first conversation with M. de Hartwig, whom he found to be very reasonable.

I venture to think that it is desirable that the Dragomans of the two Legations should have their joint audience of the Shah, and endeavour to induce him to promulgate the Electoral Law and a Constitution. It would be well to forestall the maturing of M. Isvolsky's ideas, if they are likely to lead to proposals for a restricted elected Assembly, or, what would be worse, some nominated Council which would be composed of men subservient to the Shah. I have no fear of M. Isvolsky in any way desiring to separate himself from the course which the two Governments have hitherto followed in common, but he may be temporarily influenced by counsels which would not be quite in harmony with the views of His Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[41912]

No. 316.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 1.)*

(No. 545.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 28, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith translation of an official communiqué which appeared recently in the Russian press denying that there is any truth whatever in the report that Russia intends to seek compensation in Azerbaijan for the detriment of her interests in the Near East created by the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure in No. 316.

*Official Communiqué.*

THE following official communiqué appeared in the Russian evening papers of the 23rd November last, and in the morning newspapers of the following day:—

(Translation.)

"Recently reports have appeared in the foreign and Russian daily press to the effect that a political connection exists between events in the Province of Azerbaijan and the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that the Russian Government intends seeking territorial compensation for itself in Azerbaijan. From information drawn from an entirely authoritative source the St. Petersburg Telegraphic Agency is able to state

that these reports are fictitious, and that Russia, entertaining her customary and sincere feelings of friendship towards Persia, has by no means any designs respecting her dismemberment or of any territorial acquisitions whatsoever in the Province of Azerbaijan."

[42557]

No. 317.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 7.)*

(No. 548.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 29, 1908.*

THE Turkish Ambassador informed me yesterday that M. Isvolsky had requested him to call at the Foreign Office, and, after having communicated to him the tenour of his reply to the Austro-Hungarian Government in respect to the Conference, said that he wished to speak to him on the subject of the situation in the Azerbaijan Province. M. Isvolsky remarked that he was pleased to note that the relations between the Russian and Turkish Governments were now most intimate and friendly, and that he would much regret if anything should occur which might cast a cloud over them. He explained to Turkhan Pasha the general situation in the Province of Azerbaijan, and said that the Russian Government had received information that the Committee of Union and Progress had sent medals to the followers of Sattar Khan, and were encouraging the revolutionary movement in the province. He would be grateful if Turkhan Pasha would telegraph to his Government to take measures to stop this action on the part of the Committee, which was likely to cause serious embarrassment to the Russian Government if it led to strengthening the hands of those who were causing so much disturbance and detriment to Russian interests.

Turkhan Pasha said that he had explained to M. Isvolsky that the medals to which he alluded had no significance whatever; that they were sold openly in the streets of Constantinople, and could be purchased by anyone for a few paras. He could not believe that the Committee were taking any part in what was occurring in the Province of Azerbaijan, as the Young Turks had quite sufficient on their hands at present elsewhere, and would not be at all desirous of interfering in any way in Persian affairs. He could, however, telegraph to his Government in accordance with the wish of M. Isvolsky.

Turkhan Pasha asked if I could explain to him the reason of the anxiety of M. Isvolsky in respect to the state of affairs in the Azerbaijan Province; and I gave to his Excellency a short sketch of how matters stood from the Russian point of view. I added that I believed that M. Isvolsky would be very glad if he could receive some assurance from the Committee of Union and Progress that they had no desire of intervening in Persian affairs.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[42559]

No. 318.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 7.)*

(No. 550.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 29, 1908.*

AN interpellation was introduced into the Duma by the Left parties yesterday, for which urgency was demanded, regarding what were termed the "Illegal acts" of Colonel Liakhoff in Persia. The mover of the interpellation was a Social Democrat Member, who was frequently interrupted, and who wandered into questions of general foreign policy, for which he had to be called to order by the President, who requested him to limit himself to the question before the House. He made some severe personal attacks on Colonel Liakhoff, but they do not appear to have made much impression on the House. Two Members of the Right opposed the interpellation, one of them regretting that the time of the Duma was occupied by matters of secondary importance. The motion of urgency was rejected by a large majority, and the interpellation referred to a Committee where it will probably be interred.

It is unfortunate that the interpellation was brought forward, and that it evidently did not find favour in the Duma, as it will render it more difficult now for M. Isvolsky



to carry out his wish to replace Colonel Liakhoff, and may give that officer the impression that his action in the past is not disapproved of by the majority of the House.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[42562]

No. 319.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 7.)*

(No. 553.)  
Sir,

*St. Petersburg, December 1, 1908.*

M. ISVOLSKY informed me to-day that he had mentioned to Turkhan Pasha the anxiety of the Russian Government in respect to the condition of affairs in the Azerbaijan Province, and had intimated to his Excellency that they were uneasy as to the encouragement which was being given to Sattar Khan and his adherents by the Young Turk party in the form of commemorative medals and by other marks of sympathy.

Turkhan Pasha had communicated to him yesterday the reply of Tewfik Pasha, who had explained that the medals were in reality not sent by the Young Turks, but by members of the Persian Colony in Constantinople, and that there was no desire whatever on the part of the Ottoman Government to interfere in any way in the internal affairs of Persia.

M. Isvolsky apparently seemed to regard this latter assurance as satisfactory, and as he had made no allusion to the suggestion which he had previously made to me as to procuring some undertaking from the Committee of Union and Progress, I did not think it necessary to recur to it. He remarked, in passing, that matters in Azerbaijan were not so serious as formerly; and on my observing that perhaps they would quiet down, he modified his observations by saying that nothing exceptionally disturbing had recently occurred.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[42566]

No. 320.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 7.)*

(No. 557.)  
Sir,

*St. Petersburg, December 1, 1908.*

I CALLED on M. Isvolsky this morning and informed him of the substance of Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 406 of yesterday's date, and said that apparently the Shah was contemplating the appointment of a Council of a non-elective character, which would manifestly not be in accordance with the wishes of the people in general; and that you were of opinion that it would be desirable to explain to the Shah that it was of importance that an elected Assembly should be established, and that the proposed Council should expedite the preparation of a new electoral law. M. Isvolsky read to me a telegram which he had received from M. Sabline, which reported that the Council had been opened with some solemnity in the Palace of the Shah in Tehran, and that it was to occupy itself with the elaboration of an electoral law. M. Sabline added that both Sir G. Barclay and himself were of opinion that they should observe an expectant attitude towards the Council, and should utilize such opportunities as might arise for expediting its labours. In these circumstances M. Isvolsky considered that it would perhaps be unnecessary for the moment to address any further representations to the Shah, but await the progress of the proceedings of the Council.

I told M. Isvolsky that I believed that perhaps it was inadvisable that an Assembly should be elected on a very broad basis of franchise, and it was possible that the Council, if composed of reasonable men, might elaborate an electoral law suitable to the conditions of the country, but that it was essential that an elective Assembly should be chosen, and thereby meet in some measure the wishes of the people. I quite admitted that the majority of impartial opinion was in accord that the first Assembly was sadly deficient in many respects; but I thought it was necessary to keep a very close watch on the proceedings of the Shah, as I had no confidence whatever in His Majesty's sincerity in regard to introducing a fairly liberal Constitution. All his past acts showed that he was untrustworthy.

M. Isvolsky did not differ from my estimate of the disposition of the Shah, but remarked that there was no one to replace him, and that it would be well to make the best of him. If the Shah were deposed there would be universal anarchy in Persia, and this would lead compulsorily to the intervention both of Russia and of England, and such an eventuality must, if possible, be avoided.

I said that I had not yet heard as to the opening of the Council, but that I would telegraph to you giving the substance of his conversation, and if both Representatives considered it to be desirable to adopt an expectant attitude, it was possible that His Majesty's Government might be disposed to postpone for the moment further representations to the Shah.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[42568]

No. 321.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 7.)*

(No. 559.)  
Sir,

*St. Petersburg, December 3, 1908.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 557 of the 1st December, I have the honour to transmit herewith an *aide-mémoire* which I have received from the Russian Government, giving the latest information they have received from Tehran in regard to the meeting of the Council convoked by the Shah, and the attitude recommended by M. de Sabline and Sir G. Barclay.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

*Inclosure in No. 321.*

*Aide-Mémoire.*

LES dernières nouvelles reçues de Téhéran annoncent que le Conseil convoque par le Schah à la suite des démarches faites par les Légations de Russie et de la Grande-Bretagne, démarches qui correspondent aux propositions contenues dans l'*aide-mémoire* de l'Ambassade Britannique du 17 (30) Novembre, a ouvert ses séances le 16 (29) du même mois. M. Sabline télégraphie qu'en présence de ce fait Sir G. Barclay et lui ont décidé de se tenir sur l'expectative, se réservant de prendre, à un moment favorable et avec toute la prudence nécessaire, des mesures pour tâcher de persuader le Conseil de précéder à l'élaboration d'une nouvelle loi électorale, satisfaisante pour les deux partis.

Dans ces conditions, le Gouvernement Impérial considère qu'il n'y a pas lieu de recourir en ce moment à des démarches ultérieures, et qu'il faut attendre les résultats de la mesure prise par le Schah.

*Saint-Petersbourg,  
le 19 Novembre (2 Décembre), 1908.*

[42806]

No. 322.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 7.)*

(No. 422.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 7, 1908.*

GERMAN officers at Tabreez. Your telegram No. 334 of the 1st instant.

In a telegram No. 80, Confidential, dated to-day, Mr. Consul-General Wratislaw reports that he has been unable, after inquiring of all available sources, to obtain any confirmation of the statements made by the Russian Government in regard to the assistance alleged to have been given to the nationalists at Tabreez by German officers and others.

A third-rate German correspondent, named G. Stabler, would appear to be the original of "Captain G. Stewer." Stabler went to Tabreez about the time mentioned by the Russian Government. He has been in Persia before, and is about 50. Mr. Wratislaw adds that he may be a retired officer, but that he has no information in



regard to this. There is only one stray European in Tabreez. He is taking cinematograph pictures. He is fair and calls himself a Dutchman. Mr. Wratislaw is having him watched.

A leading nationalist has informed Mr. Wratislaw that no Turkish officers have been in Tabreez, but that they have been expecting three for some little time. A Young Turk was in Tabreez some time ago, but he had gone there only to ascertain the character of the revolt.

According to a report from an Armenian source in Salmas, the Turks on the frontier promised that, in the event of the Makulis getting the better of the nationalists, they would send their Kurds to attack them.

[42884]

No. 323.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 344.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 7, 1908.*

PROPOSED intervention of Austrian and other Representatives.

I agree with the view of the Russian Government, which was communicated to me by Count Benckendorff, that, in the event of a collective representation on the part of the other Diplomatic Representatives at Tehran, the Russian and British Ministers should not join in it. If your Russian colleague takes action in the sense of this view you should co-operate with him. Count Benckendorff also informed me that, in the opinion of his Government, any intrusion into Persian politics on the part of the Representatives of the other Powers is to be discouraged by the Russian and British Ministers at Tehran.

[42884]

No. 324.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 402.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 7, 1908.*

COUNT BENCKENDORFF informed me to-day of the telegram sent to M. Isvolsky by the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran respecting the representation in favour of the Persian Constitution proposed to be made by the Austrian Minister at Tehran and the Representatives of the other Powers.

The Austrian Minister at Tehran had urged that, as England and Russia had made representations in favour of a Constitution, unless the other Powers did the same they would appear to be defending the autocratic régime.

The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran thought the intrusion of the other Powers would be undesirable.

M. Isvolsky was of opinion that our two Representatives should do their utmost to discourage the Austrian move, as the co-operation of all the Powers in a collective *démarche* would be very undesirable.

I said I agreed, and would telegraph to Sir George Barclay in this sense. I told Count Benckendorff that I thought this move would fall through if it were discouraged by our Representatives at Tehran.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) E. GREY.

[40831]

No. 325.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 213.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 7, 1908.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 282 of the 19th October, inclosing correspondence with the Persian Government on the subject of Messrs. Lynch's claim for the repayment of the running expenses of the steam-ship "Shushan."

I approve your proposal to drop the correspondence until its renewal is necessitated by the presentation of the current year's accounts.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) E. GREY

[42040]

No. 326.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 7, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st instant respecting the appointment of Military Attaché at Meshed.

I am to inform you that Sir E. Grey concurs in the view of the Secretary of State for India expressed in your letter of the 17th March last, that the status of this appointment should be left on its present undefined footing.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[42821]

No. 327.

*Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 8.)*

(No. 824.)

Sir,

*Pera, December 3, 1908.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 471 of yesterday, I have the honour to state that I had already explained to the Porte the difficult position in which the Russian Government was placed owing to the serious loss to Russian trade and interests resulting from the situation in Azerbaijan. I have again to-day explained to the Grand Vizier the position as set forth in your above-mentioned telegram.

His Highness said that he had understood that both the Russian and British Governments had been exerting their influence in Persia in favour of the Liberal movement in that country, and that the sympathies of the Ottoman Constitutional Government were naturally on the same lines, though they were careful to abstain from anything like intervention in the internal affairs of a neighbouring State.

The Persian Committee of Union and Progress, lately started among the Persians in Constantinople, had had dealings with the Ottoman Committee, and his Highness would warn the latter against any action that might possibly be interpreted as indirect interference in Persian affairs.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) GERARD LOWTHER.

[42815]

No. 328.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 8.)*

(No. 296.)

Sir,

*Tehran, November 15, 1908.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 280 of the 18th ultimo, forwarding a copy of the identic communication which the Russian Minister and I addressed to the Persian Government on the subject of the Turco-Persian frontier, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of the reply which, as reported in my telegram No. 376 of the 14th instant, I have received from the Persian Government.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 328.

*Ala-us-Sultaneh to Sir G. Barclay.*

(Translation.)

*November 4, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour and pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's note of the 18th October last respecting the arrangements made by the Ottoman Government for the recall of the Turkish troops in Persian territory, and, in reply, I have the honour to state that, according to the correspondence and telegrams received, although the Turkish troops have been diminished in certain points, no place has been evacuated, and further encroachments have been made on certain places, among which is the district of Baranduz out of the zone. In villages such as Kukia, &c., which



Tahir Pasha has in his correspondence recognized as Persian territory, Turkish Minbashis and troops have been posted. In fact during the last few days thirty-eight important villages have been occupied. It appears that a great preparation has been made for the winter, and further encroachments on the district in question are intended. A large quantity of grain and a considerable amount of money have been taken from the inhabitants. On the Anzle side, which is also out of the zone, people have been incited to revolt, and they have joined the Shakkaks in blockading the roads, robbing the post, and plundering merchandize. According to the reports from Soujboulak, Ezzet Pasha, on leaving Pasva, has left some troops with two small guns. He has also established Ahmed Effendi with nine men at Suldaz, who constantly interfere with the affairs of that place.

Reports from Kurdistan also show that the intruders have gone to Bana and incited the rebellious Mohammed Khan to plunder several villages in Saggez, and he has carried off the belongings of the people and the Government.

I avail, &c.  
(Signed) ALA-US-SULTANEH.

[42816]

No. 329.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 8.)*

(No. 297.)

Sir,

*Tehran, November 15, 1908.*

THE anti-Constitution demonstration on the 7th instant at Bagh-i-Shah and the telegrams which, it was given out, had been received from the provinces petitioning against the convocation of a Parliament were so obviously the result of the manoeuvres of the three or four Ministers, such as the Grand Vizier and the Minister of War, who have everything to lose by the re-establishment of constitutional government, that my Russian colleague and I thought it desirable to seek an opportunity of making it quite clear to the Shah that we did not regard these spurious expressions of public opinion as in any way absolving His Majesty from his pledges. We accordingly asked for audiences, and the Russian Minister was received by the Shah on Wednesday and I on the following day.

I told His Majesty that I had asked for a private audience in order to have an opportunity of speaking to His Majesty about the present crisis, and I assured him that, in saying what I was about to say, I was prompted by the most earnest desire to serve His Majesty's best interests and those of his country. I then proceeded to make the following statement drafted by the Russian Minister:—

"As your Majesty is aware, the cardinal principle of Great Britain and Russia in Persia is the avoidance of interference in her internal affairs. From this principle the two Governments will not depart. Nevertheless, the two countries, in their capacity as neighbours and friendly Powers sincerely desiring the prosperity and peaceful development of Persia, with which country they are in the closest relations, have always deemed it their duty to assist the Shah's Government with good advice, and my Russian colleague and I are fully persuaded that the friendly counsels which, in pursuance of instructions from our Governments, we venture to tender to your Majesty will be particularly welcome at a moment when Persia is traversing a serious crisis.

"Information reaches us which shows that the Persian population of the capital and in the provinces is in a state of effervescence and anxiety. Your Majesty has promised to your people the re-establishment of the constitutional régime, and this promise has been solemnly expressed *vis-à-vis* to the two friendly Powers. The events of last Saturday are inconsistent with this promise. On that day, we are told, some hundred of persons were assembled by orders of the Ministers at Bagh-i-Shah to pronounce against the Constitution, and a Petition was prepared in this sense under the influence, it is said, of the clergy and presented to your Majesty. My Russian colleague and I most earnestly hope that this demonstration, organized by men who are the enemies of the country, which in no way reflects the true sentiment of the people, will not serve to deflect your Majesty from your purpose or cause your Majesty to violate your pledges. The country, weary of disorders, abuses, and uncertainty, impatiently awaits the fulfilment of these pledges, and the two Governments which we represent cannot sufficiently insist on the necessity of pacifying the people in order to avert the great dangers which we foresee and which may have fatal

results for the future. In like manner with my Russian colleague, I have the honour to draw your Majesty's most serious attention to the disorders pending, which can now only be arrested by the fulfilment of the pledges which your Majesty has given to your people.

"In conclusion, I desire to draw your Majesty's attention to the pitiable condition of certain of your subjects under arrest charged with political offences, who have remained for months in gaol without trial. We venture to appeal to your Majesty's clemency on behalf of these unfortunate men."

After expressing his thanks for this advice, His Majesty answered the statement at considerable length. Having listened to the same language from M. de Hartwig the day before, he had had ample opportunity to prepare his reply, and he had doubtless been carefully primed by his reactionary advisers. He denied altogether the spurious character of the expressions of public feeling against a constitutional régime, and declared that there was a very large and influential portion of the people who regarded constitutional government as contrary to Islam. The Ministry had had no hand in the organization of the demonstration at Bagh-i-Shah, though no doubt the clergy had made their influence felt. He himself was in favour of a Parliament. Persia needed one, but it must be of a very different character from the late Medjliss. His Majesty drew a distinction between the present situation and that which existed at the end of 1906. Then the Government was against the Constitution and the people desired it. Now, on the contrary, the Government desired it and the people were against it. He had no intention of violating his pledges and had not yielded to the demonstration at Bagh-i-Shah; far from that, he was engaged in seeking to devise a Constitution which would suit the country. An Electoral Law had already been submitted to the provinces, but he must have time to ascertain how far it was acceptable to his people. The haste with which his last Rescript had been published, which was due to the pressure of the two Legations, was responsible for much of the present discontent. He must now be allowed time in order to win over those opposed to Parliamentary government. Referring to the persons under arrest, His Majesty said that he believed that those still in gaol were criminals and not political offenders, but he promised to examine the list.

I replied that I was very glad to learn that His Majesty was resolved to re-establish a constitutional régime. I had no desire to prescribe to His Majesty what form of constitutional government was needed for Persia, but what was necessary in the interests of tranquillity was that the people should be as promptly as possible disabused of the impression generally prevailing that His Majesty had no intention of carrying out his promises to his people. I ventured to differ from him as to public feeling in regard to Parliamentary government, and added that it was certainly the general belief that the demonstration against a Parliament was insincere. I then urged the good effect which would be produced on the situation at Tabreez by the fulfilment of His Majesty's pledges. This and the granting of an amnesty offered the best chance of restoring tranquillity there.

As regards His Majesty's reply to my appeal for clemency on behalf of the persons arrested at the time of the *coup d'Etat*, I did not think it well to press the matter, although I knew that two at least of them were still in prison who could in no sense of the word be described as criminals. To have mentioned their names would probably have led to their being subjected to worse treatment than that which they are now experiencing.

In the conversation that followed there was little, I think, deserving of further record, for it was principally a reiteration of what had already been said, but I should mention that the Shah, in referring to Tabreez, said that those who were in arms against him were not fighting for the Constitution. They were most of them Caucasian revolutionaries, and the fighting which had been going on for a year was merely an ordinary tribal rebellion. I ventured to point out to His Majesty that the fighting did not begin until the end of June, immediately after the destruction of the late Medjliss. I reminded His Majesty that the Tabreezis had recently telegraphed expressions of loyalty, and this seemed to me to offer a good opportunity for conciliation, and I repeated my opinion that an amnesty and a prompt fulfilment of His Majesty's pledges was the best means of securing the restoration of order.

After I had taken leave of the Shah, His Majesty asked Mr. Churchill, who was with me, to stay behind for a moment. He asked him to explain to me, what he had not liked to say in the presence of the Persian interpreter, that the troops who were with him at Bagh-i-Shah had come to the capital in the belief that they were

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needed to defend their religion, and that they would be dangerously incensed if His Majesty were to grant Parliamentary government, which they believed to be contrary to Islam.

The idea which the Shah wished me to carry away with me, viz., that his position was that of a Sovereign desirous to rule as a constitutional Monarch, and that he was only deterred from doing so by the reluctance of the bulk of his people to accept him in that capacity, is of course grotesque. The greater part of the population outside of the capital and a few of the larger towns are probably indifferent, but the large majority of the more or less educated classes are certainly in favour of a constitutional Government. The merchants particularly and those with an honest stake in the country see in it their only chance of security from the extortions to which they are now exposed at the hands of the Shah's irresponsible advisers.

I cannot say that I am hopeful as to the results of the two audiences. M. de Hartwig, who left Tehran to-day, and who had another audience yesterday, tells me that he took the opportunity to talk once more very earnestly to the Shah, and that His Majesty promised that within two or three days he would publish a Rescript. Even if this promise is fulfilled I doubt very much whether the measures will be of a satisfactory nature, for whoever has been engaged in preparing it, no one of the few Persians now in the country independent enough and competent to collaborate in the framing of a useful scheme has, I feel sure, had any hand in it.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[42912] No. 330.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 8.)*

(No. 423.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 8, 1908.*

ARABISTAN Telegraphs. Your telegram No. 324 of the 21st ultimo.

The Minister of Telegraphs will probably shortly make a proposal to the Indo-European Telegraph Department as a result of the negotiations which have been proceeding between them, for the Department to take over the control of the reconstruction and upkeep of the telegraph lines, Mohammerah-Borasjun and Dizful-Ahwaz, in Arabistan. According to information given to the Department, the Shah wishes iron posts gradually to be erected in place of the existing wooden ones. To do this would cost, according to the class of posts used, from 6,000*l.* to 14,000*l.* It has been suggested by Mr. Barker that we might demand in return for our services in Arabistan, which would include the partial or complete supply of posts and our annual share in the expenses of the maintenance of the lines, a prolongation till 1945 of our Telegraph Concessions. Mr. Barker considers the present opportunity a good one for obtaining this prolongation.

The original proposal was that these two questions should be dealt with together (please see your despatch No. 161 of the 18th September, 1907), though the Russian Government was afterwards informed that the question of the prolongation of the British Concessions and that of the transfer of our rights over the Tehran-Khanakin line must be treated simultaneously. The prolongation of these rights would of course be to the benefit of Russia.

An agreement with the Persian Government as to the details of the control of the Arabistan lines may possibly be retarded by a demand for the prolongation of our Concessions, but this demand need not be put forward until the principle of the Department's control over the Arabistan lines has been finally accepted by the Persian Government. If absolutely necessary, we might resume the negotiations for the exchange of the Tehran-Meshed and Khaf-Nasratabad lines as soon as the Persian Government have thus finally committed themselves, but in view of the fact that the negotiations for the exchange of these lines threaten to be difficult, it would, if possible, be better not to resume them until the prolongation of the Concessions has been secured.

I should be glad to be informed, if His Majesty's Government concur in the above suggestion, what limit of financial assistance towards the supply of iron posts on the Arabistan lines may be offered to the Persian Government in return for the prolongation of the Concessions. Are there any special stipulations desired by His Majesty's Government? The Indo-European Telegraph Department proposes to stipulate for

the erection of a wire for their own use should occasion arise, of which the Department will demand retention of control till 1945.

I have not thought it desirable to approach M. Sabline before receiving your views on the subject.

I beg that I may receive an early reply, in view of possible changes in the Ministry.

[42885]

No. 331.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 8.)*

(No. 424.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 8, 1908.*

SITUATION in Azerbaijan.

His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez reports Nationalist successes in Salmas.

Royalist camp at Basmineh was attacked last night by 200 Nationalists. Latter were repulsed with several casualties.

[40837]

No. 332.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 214.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 8, 1908.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 288, Secret, of the 4th ultimo, containing your observations on the Russian *aide-memoire* of the 2nd August, respecting railway construction in Persia.

As you are aware, His Majesty's Government have already replied to this communication in a Memorandum dated the 9th October, of which a copy has already been furnished to you in the Confidential Print.

It is, however, desirable that you should ascertain the views of His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire on those aspects of the question to which you allude in the penultimate paragraph of your despatch, and, as it is proposed that Major Cox shall take an early opportunity of visiting Tehran, to confer with you on various matters relating to the Persian Gulf, you should discuss this question with him on his arrival.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) E. GREY.

[43002]

No. 333.

*Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 9.)*

(No. 831.)

Sir,

*Constantinople, December 4, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad with regard to a telegram said to have been sent by the Mujtahids of Nedjef to the people of Persia, urging their fighting for the Constitution.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) GERARD LOWTHER.

*Inclosure in No. 333.*

*Lieutenant-Colonel Ramsay to Government of India.*

Sir,

*Bagdad, November 2, 1908.*

IN continuation of my letter, dated the 12th October, I have the honour to report that I have received a photographic copy of a telegram said to have been sent by the Mujtahids of Nedjef to the people of Persia. The telegram, if it was ever sent, was no doubt stopped in Persia, but these photographic copies can, of course, easily be distributed. A translation of the telegram is given below:—

"We publish the order of God to the general public in Persia. To-day it is a duty to depose (dafa') the powerful tyrant and spiller of blood, and also to protect the



honour and property of the followers of the Prophet. This is one of the most important duties. It is strictly forbidden to pay revenue to his agents. To fight for the firm establishment of the Constitution is like fighting in a religious war by the side of the absent Imam. If any one fails in this duty by a hair's breadth he is guilty of opposing the Imam, even of fighting against him. God forbid that any Moslem should act contrary to these orders.

"(Seals of (1) Haji Mirza Hussein Mirza Khalil, (2) Mulla Muhammad Kadhim Khorassani, (3) Sheikh Abdulla Mazandarani.)"

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. RAMSAY, Lieutenant-Colonel,  
Political Resident in Turkish Arabia, and His  
Britannic Majesty's Consul-General, Bagdad.

[43036]

No. 334.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 9.)*

(No. 290.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 9, 1908.*

PERSIAN telegraphs. Referring to Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 423 of the 8th instant.

It was arranged in the spring of this year that the prolongation of Telegraph Concessions should be treated together with question of Khanikin telegraph rights, but that the exchange of Meshed and Seistan lines should be dealt with first. I am afraid, therefore, that if we now continue prolongation of Telegraph Concessions with question of Arabistan telegraph lines some confusion will be caused in the minds of the Russian Government.

This latter question is a new one, and is one on which the Russian Government have not been consulted, and I would suggest that they should now be informed, either through me or Count Benckendorff, of the discussions which have taken place in regard to it with the Persian authorities.

The Russian Government have not yet furnished me with their views as to the Khanikin line (see M. Isvolsky's letter of the 3rd (16th) March last), nor have they replied to my last Memorandum in regard to the exchange of telegraph lines. They might therefore be requested to let us have their views on these two questions also, and be asked to raise no difficulties as to prolongation of the Telegraph Concessions.

[42993]

No. 335.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 9.)*

(No. 425.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 9, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution.

It is understood at the Russian Legation that the Shah is now showing an attitude less opposed to a Constitution.

As the moment seems opportune for such a step, we are requesting an audience of His Majesty for the two dragomans who will hand Petitions in favour of the Constitution from the people of Meshed and Astarabad to the Shah. They will also inquire as to the result of the deliberations which, according to His Majesty's statement to them at their audience of the 28th ultimo, were then in progress.

[42993]

No. 336.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 345.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 9, 1908.*

SHAH and Constitution.

Action taken by you in requesting an interview for the two dragomans (see your telegram No. 425 of the 9th instant) is approved.

[43680]

No. 337.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 411.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 9, 1908.*

COUNT BENCKENDORFF told me to-day that the Turkish Government had given very satisfactory assurances to M. Isvolsky as to non-interference in Azerbaijan, but M. Isvolsky thought, in view of the situation, that the matter should continue to receive attention at Constantinople. He hoped I would instruct Sir Gerard Lowther in this sense.

I told Count Benckendorff that I had already instructed Sir Gerard Lowther to represent to the Grand Vizier that there had hitherto been no foreign intervention in the north of Persia, and that, in order to avoid intervention in the future, it was most essential that there should be no interference from the Turkish side.

Sir Gerard Lowther had already spoken in this sense, and I hoped it would be conveyed through the Grand Vizier to the Committee.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. GREY.

[43153]

No. 338.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 10.)*

(No. 426.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 10, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution.

The Official Gazette of yesterday states that His Majesty has decided to establish a great Council composed of fifty members. These will include priests and merchants and men skilled in State affairs, and others who will be elected by the people. All branches of affairs of State will be supervised by the Council, who will discuss reforms to be introduced into the finances and other Departments of the State.

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No. 339.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 650.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 10, 1908.*

PERSIAN telegraphs.

In reply to your telegram No. 290 of the 9th December.

I will communicate my views as soon as I have learnt those of the India Office, with whom I am now in consultation on the subject.

[43224]

No. 340.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 11.)*

(No. 427.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 11, 1908.*

WOULD it be possible to find out from Mr. Preece whether the Zil intends to return to Persia?

It is reported that the Shah has recalled him.

[43245]

No. 341.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 11.)*

(No. 428.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 11, 1908.*

LIEN of Imperial Bank of Persia on customs receipts. My despatch No. 293 of the 5th ultimo.

The chairman of the bank will doubtless communicate with the Foreign Office before the shareholders' meeting on the 14th instant, and I therefore telegraph before

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receiving the reply of the Persian Government, which I am expecting daily, but which will, I am almost sure, be unfavourable.

Though I shall continue to insist strongly, I am not hopeful of obtaining anything.

The following course seems the best, unless we are prepared to threaten the seizure of the Bushire customs:—

The Imperial Bank might possibly be willing to add the interest for the current half-year to the debt of the Persian Government on condition that the receipts of the Bushire customs are assigned from the end of March for interest thenceforward accruing. I might in that case be able to extract a proposal for an informal arrangement for the Bushire receipts of the same kind as that which obtained for Kermanshah, but even should the bank be willing to make the above concession I doubt that I shall be able to get anything more binding.

[43272] No. 342.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 11.)*

(No. 429.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, December 11, 1908.*

ZIL-ES-SULTAN.

There is no need for action on my telegram No. 427 of to-day.

A telegram has been received from His Imperial Highness to say that he is coming back.

[43285] No. 343.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 12.)*

Sir, *India Office, December 11, 1908.*

IN reply to your letter, dated the 2nd instant, respecting the claims of the Persian Government to sovereignty over the Island of Bahrein, I am directed to inform you that Viscount Morley concurs in the proposal of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to accept the amended note submitted by the Persian Government subject to the omission suggested.

The Bahreini claim, which Sir G. Barclay states that he intends to present, will presumably afford an opportunity for bringing further pressure to bear upon the Persian Government in the event of their action being unsatisfactory.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[43417] No. 344.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 12.)*

(No. 430.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, December 12, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution. My telegram No. 426 of the 10th instant.

A copy of the Regulations for the new Council has been given to me by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. There is no mention of the election of any members in addition to those chosen by the Shah. There are nevertheless some good points in the Regulations, and, given a well-intentioned Shah and a nucleus of members enlightened, courageous, and honest enough to make good use of the powers conferred upon them, the new measure would probably offer the best chance of good government that Persia could have. As it is, however, the Council, representing as it does the result of the efforts of the two Legations during three months, will probably be useless, and it is hardly to be expected that the situation in the northern provinces will be favourably affected by its creation.

[43418]

No. 345.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 12.)*

(No. 431.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, December 12, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution. My telegram No. 425 of the 9th instant.

We have been informed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that, owing to an indisposition, His Majesty will not be able to receive the two dragomans. Ala-es-Sultaneh requests that the communication which we wished to make to the Shah may be made through his Highness. We have declined this proposal, and have asked that the dragomans may be received by the Shah when His Majesty is well again, but it will require some pressure to induce him to grant an audience.

[43420] No. 346.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 12.)*

(No. 432.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, December 12, 1908.*

I AM replying to your despatch No. 27, Commercial, by bag.

Since the dismissal of Zil-es-Sultan from the Governorship of Fars the insecurity of the southern roads has been increasing. This is due to the weakness of the present Governor-General.

The danger to travellers and the grave prejudice to trade consequent upon this state of affairs have been the subject of repeated representations to the Persian Government, and I am now urging that the Governor-Generalship of Fars may be given to Firman Firma.

[43446] No. 347.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 12.)*

(No. 433.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, December 12, 1908.*

SITUATION at Meshed.

His Majesty's Acting Consul-General reports that the rising of Nationalists at Meshed has come to an end, the Governor granting the leaders some unimportant concessions.

[43447] No. 348.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 12.)*

(No. 434.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, December 12, 1908.*

SPECIAL Mission to St. Petersburg.

It would have a wholesome effect on the Shah and prove to him that he is losing the sympathy of Russia if the Emperor did not grant an audience to the Persian Special Envoy, who must now be reaching St. Petersburg.

[40441] No. 349.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 348.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, December 12, 1908.*

PLEASE refer to your telegram No. 387 respecting Consular guard and Oil Syndicate.

Is it proposed that when Lorimer proceeds on leave he should be relieved by Ranking? And if this is the case, how long is the former's leave to last? It is necessary to decide immediately about the retention of the guard at Ahwaz, and Lieutenant Wilson's letter should therefore be telegraphed in substance.



[43285]

No. 350.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 349.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 12, 1908.*

QUESTION of Bahrein.

You are authorized to accept the amended version of the note from the Minister for Foreign Affairs (see your telegram No. 407 of the 30th ultimo) on condition that the objectionable passage be omitted.

If the action of the Persian Government is unsatisfactory, and further pressure on them becomes necessary, the Bahreini claim which you intend to present might be used as a lever.

[43471]

No. 351.

*Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 14.)*

(No. 832.)

Sir,

*Constantinople, December 5, 1908.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 381 of the 15th September, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad, reporting on German commercial enterprise in Western Persia.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 351.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Ramsay to Sir G. Lowther.*

(No. 972.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, October 31, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to return the despatch received with your Excellency's Confidential despatch of the 25th September, regarding efforts made by Germany to increase her trade with Western Persia through the agency of Messrs. Berk Puttmann, of Bagdad.

I do not think that M. Cesari's statements need be seriously considered. I give below M. Cesari's opinions and my own:—

*Berk Puttmann is the most active trader in the field.**He is the only one at Bagdad.*

*The Hamburg-American Line and the Deutsche Orient Bank, whom Berk Puttmann represent, enables him to dispose of considerable capital.*

I am told that Berk Puttmann's business, far from increasing of late, has decreased, as has the business of every one trading with Persia. He does a certain amount of bill discounting on behalf of the bank, but I have excellent reason for supposing that he does not enjoy in a high degree the confidence of the Deutsche Orient Bank.

*Berk Puttmann has profited enormously in his transactions in sugar.*

He used to sell sugar at a trifle below the market rate, but I hear that the Insurance Companies are making inquiries into the matter.

*The shipments of Berk Puttmann and Co. have been so large as to cover the expenses of the Hamburg-American steamers.*

It is notorious that the Hamburg-American steamers have lost heavily on their Persian Gulf business.

*Berk Puttmann has agents near Kermanshah buying large quantities of wool, which he sells well.*

Berk Puttmann has shipped large quantities of wool, but I am informed that most of it was Arab, and not Persian, wool. It is said to have been bought on commission,

and to have been highly unsatisfactory. It is persistently rumoured in Bagdad, with what truth I cannot say, that on account of his wool transactions he has been obliged to compound with his creditors in Europe.

*Berk Puttmann proposes to open a branch in Kermanshah.*

I believe that he had the idea of doing so, but in the present condition of affairs in that part of the country he is not likely to do so. British merchants in Bagdad have also considered the matter, but have come to no definite decision.

2. Berk Puttmann do a fairly good business for a private firm, but nothing more. I doubt if they make any large profits, for it is a fact that their credit is far from good, and it has deteriorated recently.

I see no signs of Government support to Messrs. Berk Puttmann, but I should not be surprised to hear that there was powerful support behind M. Wöneckhaus, a German subject trading at Bussorah and places in the Persian Gulf.

I have entered into this matter at some length, as M. Cesari may give further information, and it is as well that His Majesty's Legation at Tehran should know how much confidence to place in his statements.

3. In this connection I invite a reference to paragraph 5 of my Confidential Memorandum No. 5, dated the 22nd July, 1907.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) J. RAMSAY, *Lieutenant-Colonel, Political Resident in Turkish Arabia, and His Britannic Majesty's Consul-General, Bagdad.*

[43487]

No. 352.

*Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 14.)*

(No. 850.)

Sir,

*Pera, December 9, 1908.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 824 of the 3rd instant, I have the honour to report that the Sublime Porte informs me that they fear the continued troubled state of Persia, and especially of the Province of Azerbaijan, may eventually lead to Russian intervention in the latter district, and that, though such intervention may take the form of a temporary occupation, they feel convinced that an occupation of the nature, as exemplified recently in the case of Austria's temporary occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, will really, if carried out by Russia alone, become permanent. The Minister for Foreign Affairs argued with me yesterday that as no other Power can send troops to Azerbaijan, and the Russian expedition will presumably, if it takes place, be on a small scale, large forces being unnecessary, he was of opinion that concurrently with the entrance of Russian troops into Persia a similar Turkish force should be dispatched to Tabreez to co-operate with the Russians in temporarily maintaining order and protecting Ottoman interests. He added that Russia could not well object to such co-operation, and the fact of two Powers being associated in the intervention would insure its being of a temporary character. He had, he said, already explained this point of view to the Persian Ambassador here, and the latter, once he was convinced that Turkey had no designs on Persian territory, seemed to welcome the idea as of a nature to indirectly support Persian efforts to secure a constitutional régime.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) GERARD LOWTHER.

[42806]

No. 353.

*Memorandum communicated to Count Beckendorff, December 14, 1908.*

SIR E. GREY presents his compliments to the Russian Ambassador, and, with reference to the communication made to his Excellency on the 30th ultimo respecting the alleged presence of foreign officers at Tabreez, has the honour to state that a further telegram, dated the 7th instant, has been received from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran on the subject.

Sir G. Barclay states that His Majesty's Consul-General has inquired of all sources available, with the result that he can find no confirmation of the statement that German officers and others are assisting Sattar Khan.

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Captain Stewer seems to be identical with a German newspaper correspondent named G. Stabler, who is reported to have arrived in Tabreez about mid-October. This individual may possibly be a retired officer. He is about 50, and has been in Persia before.

The only stray European now at Tabreez is a fair man, who professes to be a Dutchman. He is engaged in taking cinematograph pictures, and His Majesty's Consul-General will watch him.

A Young Turk was in Tabreez some time ago, but only to ascertain character of the revolution. His Majesty's Consul-General learns through a leading Nationalist that no Turkish officers have been there.

*Foreign Office, December 14, 1908.*

[43660]

No. 354.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 14.)*

(No. 435.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 14, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution. My telegram No. 430 of the 12th instant.

The composition of the Council makes it clear that the Regulations are merely intended to hoodwink us.

A wholesome impression will doubtless be produced on the Shah by the unfavourable reception which the Special Envoy to St. Petersburg is likely to receive, and then will be the moment for making the strongest representations to His Majesty which the two Governments can see their way to making. We are in the meanwhile, in view of the Shah's refusal to receive our dragomans, presenting through the Minister for Foreign Affairs a joint Memorandum reminding His Majesty of his promises, and pointing out that the formation of a Council composed of members appointed by himself cannot be viewed as an accomplishment of his undertakings. We repeat our conviction that the only hope of terminating present deplorable situation lies in the convocation of an elective Assembly and an amnesty for Tabreez.

[43245]

No. 355.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 654.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 14, 1908.*

BUSHIRE customs and Imperial Bank of Persia.

Following refers to Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 428 of the 11th instant:—

The interest on the loans due to the bank from the Persian Government has, as you are doubtless aware, not been paid, and this failure to pay is owing in part to the transfer to the Russian Government from the Bank of Persia of the lien on the receipts of the Kermanshah custom-house.

His Majesty's Minister at Tehran has been making endeavours to secure, on behalf of the bank, an arrangement at Bushire which would be on the same lines as that which existed at Kermanshah until recently, i.e., that funds sufficient to meet the interest on the loans should be retained by the bank every month.

You should inform the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs of the facts of the case, and add a request that the Russian Representative at Tehran should be instructed to support Sir G. Barclay in bringing the question to a satisfactory solution. It is all the more desirable to come to an arrangement in order to avoid bringing about such a situation as is contemplated in the Anglo-Russian Convention, Article 5.

[43447]

No. 356.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 655.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 14, 1908.*

CERTAIN circumstances at Tehran seem to indicate that Russian pressure is no longer being applied so strongly. Sir G. Barclay emphasizes the importance of bringing the Shah to see that he cannot count on the sympathy of Russia so long as

he refuses to listen to counsels of reason, and on the desirability of Russia giving some tangible proof of this. However, I leave the matter of the suggestion with regard to the Persian Envoy to your discretion, as it is a somewhat delicate one.

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No. 357.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 656.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 14, 1908.*

ZIL-ES-SULTAN.

The Russian Government should be informed that, if they agree, we will inform the Zil that we no longer hold ourselves responsible for the protection of his property or for his personal safety, and that his return must be at his own risk. You should inform M. Isvolsky that His Majesty's Government had no previous knowledge of the Shah's intention to recall the Zil announced in Sir G. Barclay's telegrams Nos. 427 and 429 of the 11th instant.

[43420]

No. 358.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 352.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 14, 1908.*

INSECURITY of trade routes. See your telegram No. 432 of the 12th instant.

You should in future confine yourself to general representations, in view of the fact that it is not possible to place reliance on Firman Firma.

[43855]

No. 359.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 15.)*

(No. 298.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 15, 1908.*

PERSIA: Your telegrams Nos. 655 and 659.

At an interview which I had with M. Isvolsky to-day I spoke to his Excellency about the Shah's evasion of his promises and indifference to our advice. I said that it should be impressed seriously on the Shah that we could not allow this attitude of his to continue. M. Isvolsky, who had received no news of the Shah's refusal to receive the dragomans, asked what measures I had to propose. He was averse to any action which would look like direct intervention in favour of either party. I pointed out that the Shah had undertaken to promulgate an Electoral Law and call together an Assembly, and that we had strongly urged that an amnesty should be granted to the people of Tabreez. It would be sufficient if we took our stand on these facts. We should continue persistently to press the Shah to fulfil these engagements.

The Persian Special Envoy has just arrived, and I asked M. Isvolsky what sort of reception was to be accorded to him. He replied that he had not yet ascertained in what capacity exactly the Envoy had come, or whether he was furnished with any credentials. He believed that he was the bearer of a letter to the Emperor from the Shah, but means could be found for transmitting this letter to its destination. He would talk to the Persian Minister on the subject of the Special Envoy when the former had presented his credentials to the Emperor, a ceremony which had not yet been performed. I said that I hoped that in any case a cold reception would be given to the Envoy, and M. Isvolsky replied that his reception would certainly not be cordial, but that he must first find out something more about him.

M. Isvolsky continued that he would discuss the general question with M. de Hartwig, whom he would send to see me. I replied that I should like to have a talk with M. de Hartwig, and that I hoped he would send him to me.

In a day or two I shall speak to M. Isvolsky again on this question.



[43858]

No. 360.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 15.)*

(No. 301.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 15, 1908.*

ZIL-ES-SULTAN: Your telegram No. 656.

I saw M. Isvolsky to-day and spoke to him in the sense desired, but I could not say much or give any reasons for the recall of the Zil-es-Sultan, for I have not received Sir G. Barclay's telegrams Nos. 427 and 429. M. Isvolsky promised to look into the matter, but meanwhile I should be glad if the above-mentioned telegrams from Sir G. Barclay could be repeated to me.

[43832]

No. 361.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 15.)*

(No. 436.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 15, 1908.*

It has always been understood here that when Lorimer goes on leave Ranking will take charge, but so far as I know the Government of India have not as yet pronounced themselves in this sense, though they are anxious to meet our wishes, I believe. Lorimer has applied for two years' leave from the 15th January, 1909. He is at present on tour, and I cannot therefore communicate with him.

The following is a substance of Lieutenant Wilson's letter referred to in your telegram No. 348 of the 12th instant:—

"Wilson, while admitting that trouble is unlikely, and that the natives at the present scene of operations are better disposed, agrees with Captain Lorimer that it is not possible to count on the present attitude of the Khans remaining the same in the future, and he is of opinion that the same difficulties would be encountered as before if boring is commenced at any new place or the laying of a pipe line is begun."

Since the date of Lieutenant Wilson's letter the Shah has threatened to depose the Ilkhani, and this may bring about trouble, as was the case last year.

[43835]

No. 362.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 15.)*

(No. 437.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 15, 1908.*

LLEN of Imperial Bank of Persia on Bushire customs.

Your telegram No. 350 of the 14th instant, in which you repeat to me your telegram No. 654 to Sir A. Nicolson.

M. Sabline has already promised to give me his support in this question.

[43849]

No. 363.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 15.)*

(No. 438.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 15, 1908.*

APPOINTMENT of Firman Firma to Governorship of Fars. Your telegram No. 352 of yesterday.

Firman Firma's record in 1906 was, it is true, not good, but he has improved. His appointment appears to me to offer the best chance of relative order being restored in the province, and there is no stronger man now available for the appointment.

Firman Firma would be acceptable locally. The present condition of the trade routes is almost impossible owing to robberies, and the Governor is a failure.

I had pressed Firman Firma to accept the appointment, which I understood had been offered to him, before receiving your telegram, I also assured him of full support if he governed well.

[43660]

No. 364.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 659.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 15, 1908.*

SHAH and Constitution.

See my telegram No. 655 of the 14th instant.

In the event of your making a communication to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 435 of the 14th instant is worthy of notice. I would especially draw your attention to the second paragraph, which speaks of the reception to be given to the Shah's Envoy.

[43448]

No. 365.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 663.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 15, 1908.*

JAMSHEDIS.

The communication proposed by you may now be made (see your telegram No. 296 of the 12th instant), but the words at the end of the second paragraph, "so that if the refugees desired to return to Russia there was nothing to prevent them from doing so," should be omitted. The reason for this is that the question might be raised whether the local Afghan authorities would permit refugees to leave places in which they have been settled (see Sir G. Barclay's despatch No. 295, Meshed Diary inclosure).

[42046]

No. 366.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 353.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 15, 1908.*

OXIDE Concessions.

No reply has as yet been received to my telegram No. 339 of the 3rd instant to you. Please let me have one as soon as possible.

According to a letter received from Ellinger dated the 3rd instant, the Moin-ut-Tujjar has already submitted his firman for inspection of His Majesty's Legation.

[43966]

No. 367.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 16.)*

(No. 303.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 16, 1908.*

RETURN of Zil-es-Sultan to Persia.

M. Isvolsky is quite ready to give to the Zil the warning suggested by you, but I asked him not to take any action until I had heard further from you on the subject. As it is said that the Zil has already started, I am not sure whether a warning would not be too late.

M. Isvolsky's mind is quite clear as to our having had no previous knowledge of the Shah's action in recalling the Zil.

[43967]

No. 368.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 16.)*

(No. 304.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 16, 1908.*

SHAH'S special Envoy to St. Petersburg.

At my interview with M. Isvolsky to-day I told him that, as the Envoy apparently was not furnished with proper credentials, and as the Russian Government had deprecated his visit, an excellent lesson would be given to the Shah if the Emperor refused



to receive his Envoy. M. Isvolsky replied that to-morrow was the day fixed for the presentation by the Persian Minister of his credentials, and he had told him that he would speak to him about the Envoy after the ceremony. He had not yet seen the Envoy, and was not quite clear as to how he should treat him. He must first think the matter over.

[44060]

No. 369.

*Messrs. Dixon and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received December 17.)*

*Whitworth House, Princess Street, Manchester,  
December 16, 1908.*

Sir,

WE have the honour to address you in connection with the state of trade conditions in Persia. No doubt you are aware that owing to the political situation in Persia British trade is practically at a standstill. The chief factor which operates against trade is the insecurity of the roads, and, owing to the very frequent and serious robberies that have been taking place now for very many months, the Insurance Companies in England are in many cases declining to insure goods in Persia at all, or else insuring them at a rate that is prohibitive. This applies to British firms, but even when the goods have reached the trade centres the large native dealers are themselves unable to distribute them in the outlying districts for fear of robbery.

Another very serious matter is that, owing to the exactions of the local Khans along the trade routes, who take heavy tolls from the muleteers as they pass along, rates of mule hire are rising to an exorbitant figure, and the muleteers themselves are deserting the roads, so that not only is transport excessively expensive, but it is becoming daily more scarce and difficult to obtain. Under these circumstances we feel that it is not out of place for us to respectfully suggest that road patrols, possibly Indian soldiers, accompany each large caravan of goods. The presence of Indian soldiers, lent to the Persian authorities for convoying large caravans of goods, would not have in the slightest degree a political character, as they would be there purely to safeguard British property or Persian property with the authority of the Shah.

We earnestly beg to urge upon you the extreme necessity of some action of this kind, and beg to tender our thanks for the assistance we have had in the past and for the help and protection you will be able to extend at the present time.

We are, &c.  
(Signed) H. C. DIXON AND Co.

[44069]

No. 370.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 17.)*

(No. 439.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 17, 1908.*

HORMUZ red oxide.

The following is a summary of Moin-ut-Tujar's Concession asked for in your telegram No. 339 of the 3rd instant:—

"Hereby are confirmed in the possession of Moin-ut-Tujar, who shall pay 10,000 tomans in rent and taxes in addition to the original 16,000 tomans, the islands of Hormuz, Larek, Bostaneh, Henjam, and Kishm, as well as Minab and Khamer on the mainland.

"The above-mentioned islands and place are henceforth intrusted to Moin-ut-Tujar, and nothing shall be exacted from him beyond the above-mentioned sums. As in the past, the above-mentioned places shall be regarded as specially vested in him. The difference between the assessed and actual taxation of the above-mentioned places shall be the property of Moin-ut-Tujar, as well as all profits accruing from mines of red oxide, sulphur, and salt. The collection of taxes and their administration are intrusted to Moin, and no official shall interfere there."

The discrepancy between the sum mentioned in Mr. Marling's telegram No. 308 of last year and that in Moin's Firman is being investigated.

Moin-ut-Tujar has shown me what purport to be copies of several Firmans, to the originals of which he has not at present access. These purport to give him mining rights for red oxide in all the islands of the Persian Gulf.

[44098]

No. 371.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 17.)*

(No. 440.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 17, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution.

A meeting took place this morning between M. Sabline and myself and Saad-ed-Dowleh, who had sent word to the Russian Legation yesterday that he would like an interview with the two Representatives, as he had a message to deliver to them from the Shah.

The Shah's message was to inquire whether the two Governments would be prepared to make an advance of 400,000*l* if a Constitution were granted. Saad-ed-Dowleh explained that he had been pressed by His Majesty to accept office if he thought that he could save the country, but that he had refused to do this except under a constitutional régime, making it clear to His Majesty that the only hope of improvement in the present state of affairs lay in the establishment of a Constitution. The Shah, it appeared, was now favourably disposed, and had commanded him to sound the two Representatives as to the possibility of an advance.

I replied, on behalf of the two Representatives, that he should inform the Shah that there was no hope whatever that the two Governments would make the advance suggested except under a constitutional régime, and that this did not mean that it would be sufficient if the Shah merely issued a Decree promising a Constitution to his people. It would be essential that the Constitution should be put in force, and the two Governments would require guarantees that the money advanced was put to proper uses. Though I could not tell him the exact nature of such guarantees, the two Governments would need the assurances of M. Bizot that they were adequate.

As I gathered that His Majesty was afraid that such guarantees might involve the occupation of territory or customs, I reassured Saad-ed-Dowleh on this point, but at the same time I made it quite clear that we should naturally require guarantees as regards interest on the sum advanced. I added that things were going from bad to worse in the country, and urged that His Majesty should lose no time in announcing to the people his good intentions if he were now in earnest. Though the two Governments could not prescribe any particular form of Constitution as suitable to the country, I assured Saad-ed-Dowleh that if he needed our support and advice in his efforts to devise one he could rely on the two Governments.

Saad-ed-Dowleh appeared very hopeful when he left the Legation, and it is clear that the Shah is wavering.

[44099]

No. 372.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 17.)*

(No. 441.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 17, 1908.*

SAAD-ED-DOWLEH. My telegram No. 440 of to-day's date.

It is true that during the late constitutional régime the reputation of Saad-ed-Dowleh was bad, but the vilification of his enemies was largely the cause of this.

I am, anyhow, of opinion that he or Prince Firman Firna would be, in the present circumstances, the best man to deal with the Shah, and Governor of a province would be Firman Firna's most useful rôle.

It is to be hoped that later on good men, such as Nasr-ul-Mulk, will return to Persia, should the Constitution get into working order.

[44068]

No. 373.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 356.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 17, 1908.*

SEIZURE of Imperial Bank's remittance.

His Majesty's Government have been informed by the Imperial Bank of Persia that 250,000 krans have been seized by Ain-ed-Dowleh from the cash which they were remitting by post to Tabreez. You should protest energetically and demand immediate restitution of the amount by the Persian Government.



[43832]

No. 374.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 17, 1908.*  
 WITH reference to my letters of the 27th ultimo, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, a further telegram from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran respecting the retention of the Indian guard in the neighbourhood of Ahwaz and the question of the employment of Lieutenant Ranking at His Majesty's Vice-Consulate when Captain Lorimer proceeds on leave.\*

A letter, of which a copy is inclosed,† has been addressed to Mr. D'Arcy regarding the further retention of the guard.

I am to ask that Sir E. Grey may be furnished with Lord Morley's observations respecting the employment of Lieutenant Ranking as His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz during the absence of Captain Lorimer. On the receipt of your letter, the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury will be approached on the subject of sharing the additional cost indicated in your letter of the 18th ultimo, and half the cost of the guard from the 17th June till the 17th December, 1908.

I am, &c.  
 (Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[43832]

No. 375.

*Foreign Office to Mr. W. K. D'Arcy.*

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 17, 1908.*  
 WITH reference to my letter of the 1st instant, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to inform you that a telegram has now been received from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran giving the substance of Lieutenant Wilson's views as to the retention of the guard for the protection of the operations of your Syndicate in the neighbourhood of Ahwaz.

This officer, while allowing that the natives at the present scene of operations are now better disposed and trouble is accordingly unlikely, agrees with Captain Lorimer, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, that the continuance of the Khans in their present attitude is uncertain, and he considers that if boring were begun at any new place, or if the laying of pipe lines were undertaken, the same difficulties would be encountered as before.

In these circumstances Sir E. Grey would be glad to learn, with reference to the final paragraph of my letter of the 1st December, your views as to the retention of the guard at as early a date as possible.

I am, &c.  
 (Signed) LOUIS MALLET

[43966]

No. 376.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 670.)  
 (Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, December 18, 1908.*  
 ZIL-ES-SULTAN.

See my telegram No. 300 of to-day to Sir F. Bertie and your telegram No. 303 of the 16th instant.

With reference to the proposed joint communication to the Zil, you should lay the suggestion before M. Isvolsky, and ask him to forward instructions in this sense to the Russian Ambassador in Paris.

\* No. 361.

† No. 375.

[43966]

No. 377.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.*

(No. 300.)  
 (Telegraphic.) P.  
 RETURN of the Zil to Persia.

*Foreign Office, December 18, 1908.*

Following refers to Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 303 of the 16th instant, Sir G. Barclay's telegrams Nos. 427 and 429 of the 11th instant, and my telegram No. 656 of the 14th instant to Sir A. Nicolson.

When your Russian colleague has received similar instructions you should join with him in making a communication in the sense of my telegram No. 656 to Sir A. Nicolson to the Zil-es-Sultan, who, His Majesty's Government understand, will be at the Grand Hotel at Paris on the 20th instant. In the event of his Highness demanding an explanation, you should reply that His Majesty's Government thought it desirable to warn him that in the case of internal disturbances in Persia consequent upon his return there, the attitude of His Majesty's Government would have to be perfectly neutral, and they would not be able to intervene in favour of himself nor of his family or property. The feelings of His Majesty's Government towards the Zil himself are entirely friendly.

You should discourage any idea which he may entertain of visiting London.

[44069]

No. 378.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 357.)  
 (Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, December 18, 1908.*  
 SEE your telegram No. 439 of yesterday's date.

Oxide Concessions in Persian Gulf.

Seeing that several islands in the Gulf do not form part of the Shah's dominions, the other Firmans which the Moin states that he possesses cannot rightly embrace all the islands in the Persian Gulf. As Strick wishes to obtain Concessions on Nabiyyu Farur, Little Tamb, and Sirri, you should try to get the original Firmans of which the Moin has shown you copies submitted to you, and find out whether they include these islands. It is probable that the Sheikh of Shargah would lay claim to Little Tamb.

[44341]

No. 379.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 19.)*

(No. 307.)  
 (Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburg, December 19, 1908.*  
 PERSIAN situation.

Information similar to that contained in Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 440 has reached M. Isvolsky from Tehran. M. Isvolsky considers that the Shah's latest move holds out some hope of the possibility of finding some basis for the improvement of the situation. His Excellency states that he is willing that the work of encouraging further satisfactory developments should be left to the two Legations at Tehran.

[44320]

No. 380.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 19.)*

(No. 443.)  
 (Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, December 19, 1908.*  
 SEIZURE by Ain-ed-Dowleh of bank's property near Tabreez. Your telegram No. 356 of the 17th instant.

On learning that Ain-ed-Dowleh had seized 25,000 tomans, I made an energetic protest to the Persian Government, and demanded that the money taken should immediately be refunded.

I have received the promise of the Grand Vizier that the money will be repaid by the 24th instant.



[44344]

No. 381.

*Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 20.)*

[By Post.]

(No. 111.)

(Telegraphic.)

*Paris, December 19, 1908.*

PERSIA. Your telegram No. 300 of yesterday.

I have seen the Russian Ambassador. He had been told by M. Isvolsky that the Zil-es-Sultan was said to be in France and to intend to return to Persia, and his Excellency was to make inquiries, but he had not received instructions to make any communication to the Zil-es-Sultan. The Ambassador had, however, been approached by His Royal Highness through M. de France, late French Minister in Persia, to the effect that he entertained friendly feelings towards both Russia and England, that he desired to return to Persia to be a loyal subject to the Shah and to abstain from politics.

I informed the Russian Ambassador of the instructions which you had given me, and of the Zil-es-Sultan having arrived yesterday at Paris, but that it was not known how long he intended to remain. By agreement with his Excellency I called on the Zil-es-Sultan, and told him that His Majesty's Government had learnt that he proposed to return to Persia, and that they trusted that, in view of the assurances which had been given to His Royal Highness in regard to his life and property, he would not carry out the intention which was ascribed to him pending a joint communication which would probably very shortly be made to him by the Russian Ambassador and myself.

The Zil-es-Sultan told me that he had received a friendly message from the Shah, who desired that he should return to Persia, and an order to the same effect from the Prime Minister and a message from His Royal Highness' brother begging him to return. In view of these telegraphic messages he felt that he could not do otherwise than obey the Shah's commands, particularly as they coincided with his own wishes, which were to remain a loyal subject of His Majesty, to abstain from politics, and, as he was getting old, to live a retired life and look after his private affairs. His kinsmen and servants in Persia were costing him 100,000*l.* a-year, and he could not afford in addition to such expenditure to live permanently in Europe. His sister had taken possession of his garden, and though he had made repeated applications on the subject to the British Legation, he had not received any reply. The Shah had promised him satisfaction in this matter if he returned. His Royal Highness does not propose to start for Persia until about a week from now.

The Russian Ambassador will telegraph to M. Isvolsky informing him of your instructions to me, and asking his Excellency for instructions as to a joint communication to the Zil-es-Sultan.

[44343]

No. 382.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 20.)*

(No. 442.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 20, 1908.*

OXIDE Concessions. Your telegram No. 357 of the 18th instant.

One of the copies of Moin-ut-Tujar's Firmans which I have seen speaks of "the red oxide in all the ports of the Persian Gulf," and another of "all the red oxide mines in the Persian Gulf."

I shall try to see the other Firmans.

In order to run no risk of antagonizing Moin and thereby impede the negotiations in regard to Hormuz, I have hitherto refrained from pointing out to him that certain islands in the Gulf are not in the gift of the Persian Government.

To run the negotiations for the scheme mentioned in your telegram No. 357 simultaneously with those relating to Hormuz appears to me to present considerable difficulty, and I think it would be better, before seeking to secure rights in islands from which we should be able to exclude other applicants owing to Joasim claims, first to make sure, either by contract for supply of oxide or by formation of a company, of British control over Moin-ut-Tujar's rights under his Firman of 1904, places mentioned in which are undoubtedly Persian.

[44421]

No. 383.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 299.)

Sir,

*Tehran, November 22, 1908.*

WITH reference to Mr. Grant Duff's despatch No. 135, Secret, of the 21st May last, I have the honour to report that it has come to my knowledge that the Persian Government have pledged the Caspian Sea Fisheries Royalties to an Armenian banking firm, Messrs. Toumaniantz Frères, for a further period of three years—1912, 1913, and 1914.

Although the tying up of these royalties increases our hold on the Customs revenues in the south, I have deemed it my duty to protest *pro forma* against this further hypothecation of revenues affected to the service of the loans of 1903 and 1904; and in the protest which I have addressed to the Persian Government, I have taken the opportunity to remind them that the interest on these loans is overdue since April last.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[44422]

No. 384.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 300.)

Sir,

*Tehran, November 25, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of a note which I have addressed to the Persian Government on the subject of the outstanding British claims in the province of Fars.

Many of these cases have been outstanding for a considerable time, and the repeated representations which Mr. Marling addressed to the Persian Government produced little or no effect on the Zil-es-Sultan who, more especially towards the end of his Governorship, when he felt his position threatened, made no attempt even to investigate the numerous cases in which British interests were involved.

Assaf-ed-Dowleh, the new Governor-General, has, since his arrival at Shiraz, shown a more conciliatory spirit, but it is doubtful whether he will be strong enough to effect a settlement of many of the claims which have arisen from robberies, &c., in outlying districts where his authority is practically ignored.

I shall report what steps are taken by the Persian Government to give effect to my representation.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 384.

*Sir G. Barclay to Ala-es-Sultaneh.*

Your Highness,

*Tehran, October 26, 1908.*

WITH reference to the note which your Highness was good enough to address to me on the 17th instant to the effect that a complete list of the outstanding British claims at Shiraz had been handed to the Governor with a view to a special official being appointed in order that these claims may be investigated, I have the honour to state that it is most desirable that every effort should be made by the local officials to arrive at a speedy settlement of these questions, involving as they do a sum of over 34,000 tomans.

Many of these have been outstanding for a long period, and in most cases are on account of robberies on the high roads, for the security of which the Persian Government is directly responsible, and unless it is found possible to give satisfaction at an early date in the numerous cases in which the interests of British subjects are involved, it will be my duty to report the circumstances to my Government and to inquire what further steps I should take in order to obtain a prompt settlement of these just claims.

I avail, &amp;c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.



[44423]

No. 385.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 301.)

Sir,

Tehran, November 25, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, with reference to my despatch No. 277 of the 8th October, a copy of an extract from a private letter from Captain Lorimer replying to an inquiry as to the truth of the allegations of discourteous conduct brought against him by Herr Mygind, a correspondent of the "Berliner Tageblatt," as reported in Sir F. Lascelles' despatch No. 183, Commercial, of the 20th August last.

I venture to think that Captain Lorimer's inclosed statement bears out in a marked manner the opinion of the nature of Herr Mygind's contributions to his newspaper which I had the honour to express in the final paragraph of my despatch No. 281 of the 19th October.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 385.

*Captain Lorimer to Mr. Loraine.*

ABOUT Mygind's allegations I am absolutely at a loss. I left Nasiri by the "Shushan" on the 6th May, and up to that date I was not aware that Mygind had yet left Isfahan. If he was in Nasiri on that date he must have concealed his identity as I am sure that no European knew of his presence. I certainly never saw him, much less spoke to him, and from first to last have had no kind of communication direct or indirect with him.

On leaving Nasiri I went up to Shuster and Dizful; the latter place I left on the 25th May, and I travelled up to Isfahan via Gotwand, Bazuft, and Karkunun. This route is entirely separated from Lynch's road, and it was only on my arrival at Isfahan on the 30th June that I heard that Mygind had been at that place and had left it for Ahwaz by the Lynch Road. I think inquiry will prove Mygind and I were never within many miles of each other. But if he was actually in Nasiri on or before the 6th May he might be asked to say when he called on me, and if he did not call on me how and where he was introduced to me and what witnesses he can bring to prove his statements. If there is any reason for granting his good faith, I can only suggest that he has been labouring under a misapprehension as to my identity.

All that I had to do with the Lurs has been reported in my diaries and is correctly stated in the Minister's despatch.

His statement regarding the attitude of the resident English towards German competition does not bear on it any signs of truth, unless he has misunderstood remarks which might have been made to him in chaff. It is much more likely that he was cold-shouldered.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) D. L. LORIMER.

[44424]

No. 386.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 302.)

Sir,

Tehran, November 25, 1908.

AS reported in my telegram No. 391 of the 22nd instant, a further demonstration was held at Baghi-i-Shah on the 19th instant against the convocation of an Assembly. What exactly happened is not quite clear, but it appears to be certain that a petition from the clergy, prepared under the auspices of Sheikh Fazlullah, the Imam Jumei, the Grand Vizier, Prince Naib-es-Sultaneh, the Shah's uncle and father-in-law, and Amir Behadur Jang, was presented to the Shah, representing that an Assembly was contrary to Islam, and that His Majesty, with a show of reluctance, gave a Rescript in the sense desired. The Rescript was sent to the Government printer on the 21st instant, and on that day the Grand Vizier told Abbas Kuli Khan, in answer to an inquiry from me, that it was to be promulgated as soon as printed.

After consulting with my Russian colleague, we agreed to present to the Minister for Foreign Affairs a Memorandum signed by us both, urging the Shah to reconsider his decision. Owing to a misunderstanding, the Persian text prepared for our signature was in the form of a note. Though this gave the representation a somewhat more formal character than I had intended, considerable delay would have been entailed by changing the form, and we therefore decided to present it as it stood. As it was, it was too late to prevent the appearance of the Shah's Rescript, which was early in the evening in the hands of the public, and had been sent to the clergy in the provinces with orders to make it public. I afterwards ascertained that Ala-es-Sultaneh did not communicate our note to the Shah until the evening of the 23rd. It appears to have had an immediate effect, for on the same night orders were sent to the printer to distribute no more copies, and efforts were made to withdraw from circulation the copies already issued. The following evening Ala-es-Sultaneh sent me word by Mr. Churchill that he was to come and see me the next morning to explain the real character of the Rescript.

Ala-es-Sultaneh called this morning, and said that he had come by order of the Shah to give me certain supplementary information respecting the Rescript. He then proceeded to tell me that the Shah had been exceedingly annoyed by the tone of our representation, the wording of which was too strong, and quite different from our earlier representations, which had taken the form of friendly advice. I told him that the note had been drafted by myself, and that my only object had been to prevent the Shah from publishing a decision which was in complete violation of His Majesty's pledges to his people and to the two Representatives. I asked him which passage was the one to which His Majesty had taken particular exception, and his Highness mentioned the allusion to the evil counsellors in His Majesty's entourage. I told him that I had used much stronger language during my recent audience when I had described the persons in question as the enemies of their country, to which he replied that much might be said in private audience which should not appear in an official note. I quite agreed on this point, but declined to admit that there was anything in the note to which, in the circumstances, objection could properly be made. Speaking very confidentially, his Highness then said that what he himself disliked was that the Russian Representative should have signed such a document. He knew that Great Britain's advice to Persia had always been prompted by an interest in the country's welfare, but Russia's advice had not always been prompted by unselfish motives, and the course now taken by the Russian Representative was not entirely consistent with the past action of the Russian Legation. I replied that M. Sabline's signature was convincing proof that the two Legations were of one mind and spoke with one voice in matters concerning the interests of Persia. His Highness retorted that it would take time to remove a deeply-rooted impression to the contrary.

Alluding to the Rescript, he said that it did not mean that the Shah would not summon any Medjliss, but only that he would not have a Medjliss like the last. Besides this, it was not a Rescript, properly speaking, at all; it was merely an answer to the Ulema; it was not official, as it had not been published through the Grand Vizier, and it had been printed and circulated by the clergy. I replied that it was much to be regretted that it should have been published at all, and I asked him whether I might inform my Government that it was against the Shah's orders that it had been made public. It seemed to me that his Highness sought to evade a direct answer, but finally he said I might telegraph that, so far as he knew, the document had not been printed by command of the Shah, who was still resolved to convoke a Medjliss suitable to the needs of the country and compatible with Mahomedan law, in accordance with the promise contained in his Decree of the 24th September. (See my despatch No. 276 of the 8th ultimo, inclosing the Decree.) I gathered that the contemplated Medjliss is nothing more than a Council of State to be nominated by the Shah, and I asked his Highness when the electoral law might be expected. He replied that His Majesty had caused one to be prepared, but had been prevented from promulgating it because of the manifest signs that his people were opposed to a constitutional régime. A long discussion then ensued as to the desirability of a Medjliss. Briefly, I may say that I repeated my opinion that in the convocation of an elective Assembly lay the only chance of restoring order in Azerbaijan and quiet in the rest of Persia. His Highness declared it to be his opinion that the trouble in Azerbaijan had nothing to do with the question of the Constitution, that Persia was not ready for Parliamentary Government—a fact which the excesses of the late Medjliss proved—and that the majority of the people were against it. He added that the Shah feared that bloodshed would ensue if an Assembly were convoked, so strong was the feeling against it, and he showed me a



bundle of telegrams from the provinces to prove this general anti-Constitution sentiment. In reply to his inquiry whether I doubted the authenticity of these telegrams, I said that I did not, but that I was, nevertheless, convinced that they could not be taken as evidence of any genuine public feeling which, so far as the people in the Capital, the educated classes, and those who had a stake in the country were concerned, was, I was convinced, in favour of an elective Assembly, by which the Shah's evil counsellors could be subjected to some control. The great bulk of the people, I admitted, probably cared nothing for a Constitution, but what they did desire was security and peace, and this was not to be obtained under the present deplorable régime. Finally, Ala-es-Sultaneh drew from his pocket a Belgian paper—I think it was the "Indépendance Belge"—with a passage scored in red pencil alluding to the Constitutional aspirations in Egypt, and said that he had been specially told by the Shah to draw my attention to this passage, and to ask why, if we thought Parliamentary Government such a benefit, Egypt was without one. I told him that he might be sure that were Persia governed as well as Egypt, there would be no need to give her any advice.

I asked Ala-es-Sultaneh to arrange for an audience for the two dragomans. His Highness discouraged the idea, suggesting instead a private audience for myself. I pointed out that my last audience had served no useful purpose, and expressed the opinion that a frank conversation between the Shah and the dragomans might lead to more useful results. If I had another audience it would be jointly with my Russian colleague, and we should probably have to make further representations to His Majesty under orders from our Governments. It was in the hope of avoiding this necessity that we wished for an audience for the two dragomans. His Highness evinced some curiosity as to the further representations we should have to make, and affected to be anxious lest the dragomans might go too far in what they said. I endeavoured to reassure him, and in the end he consented to take the Shah's pleasure regarding the proposed audience.

I inclose a translation of the Shah's Rescript, and also a copy of the joint note of the 22nd November.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 386.

*Shah's Rescript of November 19, 1908.*

(Translation.)

In the name of Almighty God, the Most High!

Their Reverences the Clergy,

OUR intention has always been, and is, to support and protect Islam and the laws of the Prophet. Now that you have shown that the institution of a Medjliss is contrary to the laws of Islam and you have decreed its unlawfulness, and the clergy of the provinces have written and telegraphed their Decrees that it is unlawful, therefore we also have entirely given up this idea, and in future such a Medjliss will not even be mentioned. But by the help of the absent Imam (may his appearance be hastened!) the necessary instructions have been, and will be, given for the extension of justice. Your Reverences will inform all classes of this our Royal will regarding the spread of justice, and the protection of the rights of our subjects and the remedying of evils according to the religious laws of Islam.

(Signed) MOHAMMED ALI SHAH KAJAR.

Inclosure 2 in No. 386.

*Joint Note communicated to Ala-es-Sultaneh.*

Altesse,

*Téhéran, le 22 Novembre, 1908.*

LES Représentants de la Grande-Bretagne et de la Russie ont appris avec étonnement et regret que Sa Majesté Impériale, suivant les mauvais conseils de son entourage et se servant comme prétexte de Pétitions qui n'expriment nullement les vrais sentiments de son peuple, a l'intention de convoquer une Assemblée de Représentants du peuple.

Les Représentants des deux Puissances ne manqueront pas de télégraphier à leurs Gouvernements, pour leur faire savoir, cette décision regrettable du Shah, par laquelle il démontre son intention de ne pas remplir les promesses données maintes fois à son peuple et aux deux Représentants; et ils auront pour devoir plus tard de faire des représentations par ordre de leurs Gouvernements pour faire voir à Sa Majesté la nécessité sous laquelle il se trouve, dans ses propres intérêts et dans ceux de son pays, de revenir sur la décision dont il s'agit.

En attendant les instructions de leurs Gouvernements, les deux Représentants, quoique désirant éviter toute ingérence dans les affaires intérieures de la Perse, croient de leur devoir répéter leur conviction que le seul moyen d'apaiser le peuple, qui, à cause de l'attitude du Shah envers la Constitution, se trouve en révolte dans la Province d'Azerbaïdjan et dans un état d'effervescence et d'inquiétude dans la capitale, aussi bien que dans les autres provinces, serait de s'affranchir des conseils des personnes intéressées à voir continuer le régime déplorable actuel et de rétablir un régime constitutionnel.

(Signé) G. BARCLAY.  
SABLINE.

[44425]

No. 387.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 303.)

Sir,

*Tehran, November 26, 1908.*

IN connection with the departure from Persia of His Highness Salar-ed-Dowleh, a younger brother of the Shah, which was reported in the last monthly summary of events inclosed in my despatch No. 287 of the 4th instant, I have the honour to state that, upon referring to the Persian Foreign Office certain claims against His Highness for money due by him, Mr. Vice-Consul Ewart was informed that the affairs of His Highness were now in the hands of the Russian Legation, and that all claims, &c., should be referred to them and not to the Foreign Office.

When I mentioned this to M. de Hartwig, he told me that for some days before leaving Persia Salar-ed-Dowleh had enjoyed the hospitality of the Russian Legation, and that he had gone to Russia accompanied by a munshi of the Legation; that he has been asked to protect His Highness' property during his absence, but that he had only promised to assist "dans les limites du possible."

The assistance which is being given to His Highness by the Russian Legation, though of a not very definite character, is interesting, as in the event of the death of the Shah during the minority of the Valiahd Salar-ed-Dowleh would be one of the two or three candidates for the Regency.

His Highness, who is eccentric, and in the opinion of many can scarcely be held responsible for his actions, was, it may be remembered, leader in a rebellion against the Shah during the summer of 1907, and eventually took refuge in His Majesty's Consulate in Kermanshah. He again, at the end of September last, evinced a desire to seek the protection of His Majesty's Government, but was dissuaded by Mr. Marling from coming to the Legation.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[44426]

No. 388.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 304.)

Sir,

*Tehran, November 29, 1908.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 302 of the 25th instant, I have the honour to transmit copy of the reply of the Persian Government to the joint note which my Russian colleague and I addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 22nd instant, in the hope of stopping the publication of the Shah's rescript, in which His Majesty announced his abandonment of all idea of summoning the Medjliss. You will see that we are requested to notify in the proper quarter the Shah's resolve to grant a Medjliss suited to the nature of the country, to the laws of Islam, and to the



habits of the Persian people. The Medjliss in question is doubtless the Council appointed by the Shah, the institution of which was announced by His Majesty to the two Dragomans at their audience on the 28th instant, recorded in a separate despatch.

It will be noticed that the first paragraph of the note is much involved. Its object, however, is plain enough, viz., to convict my Russian colleague and me of having made unauthenticated rumour the basis of our representation. The Persian Government do not go so far as to assert that our information that the Shah had decided not to convoke a representative assembly was incorrect. The Grand Vizier had himself given me to understand as much, and the Shah's decision stands recorded in a document signed by His Majesty and printed by the Government printer, which for some time circulated freely; but they declare that we had no ground for attributing this resolve to the evil counsels of His Majesty's courtiers, of whose advice His Majesty stands in no need, and who "do not hold such a view," a phrase which, if it has any sense at all, can only mean that the Shah's courtiers are not opposed to a representative assembly—a truly astounding contention.

Our note served its purpose in so far as its presentation to the Shah was promptly followed by the issue of orders to suppress the rescript, and my Russian colleague and I think we can afford to overlook the imputation that we acted on an unfounded rumour.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 388.

*Ala-es-Sultaneh to Sir G. Barclay.*

(Translation.)

Your Excellency,

*Tehran, November 27, 1908.*

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Excellency's note of the 22nd November. The accusation of giving evil counsels, which was made against the courtiers only on the strength of a report to this effect, which has no foundation whatever, and caused surprise and regret to the two exalted representatives, has caused greater surprise and regret to me, because you have based this regrettable statement on a report, and have allowed your thoughts such a degree of freedom before verifying the authenticity of such a report, and that you have stained the courtiers of the Imperial Government merely on the belief that they hold such a view, when they do not entertain it at all.

Thank God, His Imperial Majesty, with the great talent and vigilance which he shows for the task of keeping in order the Monarchical system and for the comfort of his people, does not stand in need of any advice from his courtiers. His Majesty is by nature well versed in the duties he is called upon to perform for his country and people. His Majesty is also well acquainted with the customs and habits of the Persian people, and will act in accordance with the exigencies of the time, and will now grant a Medjliss which will suit the requirements of the time, the religion, and national customs of the Persian people, but will not cause anarchy and trouble in the country.

I do not consider it superfluous to draw your Excellency's attention to the state of affairs during the two years of the Constitutional system of Government, which gave rise to all kinds of disorders, and I have to point out that the grant of a Medjliss such as the last one is not suited to the feelings of the public, and that so much liberty is unbecoming, and will produce the anarchy and mischief which have already been witnessed.

In view of the friendship which happily exists between the two Governments, and which the high officials of the two Governments wish to maintain and to strengthen, I trust your Excellency will notify to the proper quarter the Royal intention of granting a Medjliss suited to the nature of the country, the laws of Islam, and the habits of the Persian people, so that the country and the nation may prosper under the auspices of His Imperial Majesty.

I avail, &c.  
(Signed and Sealed) MOHAMED ALI, ALA-ES-SULTANEH.

[44427]

No. 389.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 305.)

Sir,

*Tehran, November 29, 1908.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 330 of the 6th ultimo, and to Messrs. Ziegler's letter to your Department of the 28th September last, which reached me in the print sections, I have the honour to report that Mr. Consul-General Wratisslaw learns from his Russian colleague that he had included in his list of claims losses of the indirect nature referred to by Messrs. Ziegler. M. Pakhitonoff has forwarded his list of claims to St. Petersburg and to the Russian Legation here, but I have ascertained from my Russian colleague that no specific claim has yet been filed by his Legation with the Persian Government, and that so far the Legation's action has been confined to holding the Persian Government generally responsible for losses suffered by Russian subjects.

I shall not lose sight of the matter, and if when the time comes other Legations present claims of the indirect nature referred to I shall not fail to report.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[44428]

No. 390.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 306.)

Sir,

*Tehran, December 1, 1908.*

WITH reference to Mr. Marling's telegram No. 293 of the 5th September last, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire, in regard to the murder of Abu Thabi subjects by the inhabitants of Taona.

In view of the fact that the murderers, who during the summer were at the pearl fisheries, have now retired inland, and that, as Major Cox points out, the chances of capturing them are now remote, I have addressed a further note to the Persian Government pressing for an early settlement of the question of compensation to the families of the murdered men, and, while informing Major Cox of the action I have taken, I am suggesting that the question of the punishment of the men still at large should be held over until the spring, when, if they should return to the pearl fisheries, an opportunity may be afforded for effecting their capture.

A copy of the note which I have addressed to the Persian Government is inclosed herewith.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 390.

*Major Cox to Sir G. Barclay.*

Sir,

*Shiraz, October 5, 1908.*

WITH reference to the correspondence ending with my telegram dated the 3rd September, 1908, on the subject of the murder of Abu Thabi subjects by inhabitants of Taona, I have the honour to forward translations of further reports received from the Residency Agent, Lingah, and beg your perusal of them.

It will be noted, in the first place, that the doubtful identity of Saad (or Saeed)-bin-Abdullah has been set at rest, and that he appears merely to have intervened as a purchaser of a parcel of pearls, which he may have acquired in good faith; so that we are hardly concerned further with him.

In other respects Khan Sahib Agha Bedr's recent investigations corroborate the information previously telegraphed, and indicate—

1. That the three sons of Jasim are still alive and at large, in spite of the statements of the Persian Government to the contrary.

2. That Sheikh Mohamed-bin-Arahmeh Bushri, Zabit of the hamlet of Nakhl-i-Amir, Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Mohamed Bushri, Zabit of Taona, and the Sowlet-ul-Mulk, Governor of Bustek, one and all assisted the pirates at one stage or another, and directly or indirectly partook of the proceeds of the outrage.

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3. That a fourth local Headman, Sheikh Ahmed-bin-Rashid Marzooqi, Zabit of the port of Moghu, has now to be added to the list of confederates, he being the present Overlord of the village of Nakhli-i-Amir, and having apparently accepted the responsibility of recovering from Mohamed-bin-Jasim the amount of the bribe paid in Shiraz to secure his release.

Of the latter development I shall speak later on.

The hamlet of Nakhli-i-Amir, which, according to my information, is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  farsakhs north-west of Charek and almost due north of Taona, has hitherto been regarded and spoken of as being under Taona; but in such unsettled regions it often happens that in the course of blood feuds or village quarrels a particular community will transfer its allegiance from one petty local Sheikh to another, according to the direction from which, for the time being, it can expect the greater measure of practical assistance when in difficulty. Such considerations probably account for our Agent's present statement that Nakhli-i-Amir now looks to Moghu for protection.

The lie of the neighbourhood in question will be apparent from the rough diagram given in the margin,\* which is approximately on a scale of 16 miles to the inch.

All the places named are included in what is known as the Shibkuh district, a tract which has been a frequently recurring source of trouble to the Residency in the past, owing to the fact that when any inconvenient incident occurs within its jurisdictional responsibility is invariably bandied about between the Governor of the Gulf Ports and the Governor-General of Fars, the district being directly under Shiraz for revenue purposes, but its coast-line nominally under the Governor of the Gulf Ports. The latter is usually afraid, in any case, to take any effective action there, lest he should thereby fall foul of the Shiraz Government.

In his concluding communication the Residency Agent has recommended that, the opportunity for capturing the pirates at sea having lapsed, we should demand their surrender from the Sheikh of Moghu. At the time his report was written and up to now Bushire has been devoid of any effective authority, the Derya Begi, who might have co-operated, having been dismissed, and his successor, the Muazziz-ed-Dowleh, of whom I hesitate to expect much, not having joined the appointment. In any case, now that the brothers are back at their home inland, time admits of an exchange of views as to the best course which can now be pursued in regard to the case generally.

Owing to the situation of Nakhli-i-Amir above described close to the maritime range and at some distance from the coast, the chances of His Majesty's ships repeating the successful capture achieved last year at Bunder Rig must necessarily be regarded as problematical. On the other hand, an abortive attempt to capture them by our own dispositions would, it seems to me, be calculated to weaken your hands for pressing our claim for compensation at Tehran. It will be remembered that this case of piracy with murder has now remained unexpiated for six years, and while the expeditious capture of these pirates on the pearl banks, following on the capture of the Dayir pirates last year, would have operated greatly to our interests and prestige, yet the most important object from my point of view is that the compensation to Abu Thabi should no longer be delayed, and that a standing grievance, which has had a most prejudicial effect upon the attitude of the Sheikh towards the Residency and British subjects trading in his territory, should be laid to rest.

Subject, therefore, to the conclusions to which a consideration of these papers may bring you, I am inclined to think our best course is to use the details at present brought into prominence as a basis for another insistent demand for the payment of compensation. The items to which I refer are:—

1. That the Shiraz prisoner Mohamed-bin-Jasim (of whom we have a photograph) has been allowed to escape.
2. That the other two brothers are also alive and back in their old haunts, in spite of the assertions of the Persian Government that they had been disposed of.
3. That the Sowlet-ul-Mulk, Governor of Bustek, and three other petty Sheikhs of the Shibkuh district have all been accessories after the fact, and have assisted the pirates and shared their ill-gotten gains.

If the Persian Government will capture the men so much the better, but I would earnestly deprecate any pretended or real endeavours on their part to capture them being allowed to block our demand for the payment of compensation.

\* Not reproduced.

I beg to be favoured with your early views or instructions after a consideration of these papers, of which I am forwarding copies to the Government of India.

In conclusion, I beg to revert for a moment to the question of the escape of the Shiraz prisoner. Pending a decision as to whether we ourselves shall take any action in the direction of the capture of the trio, I have purposely avoided raising any question with the Shiraz authorities as to the whereabouts of any of them. There seems to be no doubt that Mohamed-bin-Jasim was in durance here at the time of my arrival in June, for he had shortly before addressed an appeal to the Consulate begging us to agree to his release; but I have ascertained by confidential inquiries that he is no longer among the prisoners, and it appears that some two months ago, when His Highness the Zil-es-Sultan realized that he would not be permitted to retain the Government of Fars, he set free a number of prisoners, among them Mohamed-bin-Jasim, His Highness's underlings doubtless first taking substantial presents from the relatives of the prisoners in cases where they could afford to pay. This explanation of the prisoner's escape fits in chronologically with the information furnished by our Langah Agent, whose account of the financial arrangement on which his release was effected is in all probability the correct one.

I have, &c.

(Signed) P. Z. COX, Major, British Resident in  
the Persian Gulf, and His Britannic  
Majesty's Consul-General for Fars,  
Khuzistan, &c.

Inclosure 2 in No. 390.

*Khan Sahib Agha Bedr to Major Cox.*

(Translation.)

*Lingah, August 25, 1908.*

REFERRING to your letter dated the 12th (22nd) July, 1908, regarding the piracy committed by the people of the Taona port, residing at the Nakhli-i-Amir village, a dependency of the said port.

The necessary inquiries made [by me] into the matter show that there are three brothers, viz., Ahmed, the eldest, Mohamed, the second, and Gheithoo, the youngest son of one Jasim, who belong by origin to the Bushri tribe, and who are relatives of Sheikh Mohamed-bin-Arahmeh Bushri, Zabit of Nakhli-i-Amir, and of Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Mohamed Bushri, Zabit of the port of Taona, and Headman of the Bushri tribe. These three men committed murder and plunder of the Abu Thabi subjects on the sea, and, after committing that deed, took the boat and the property of the murdered persons and came to Taona. Sheikh Mohamed-bin-Arahmeh, Headman of the Nakhli-i-Amir village, took possession of the boat belonging to the murdered persons, changed some of its planks and gear, and converted it into a fishing-boat for himself. The pearls belonging to the victims, which had been brought over by the murderers, were taken possession of by Sheikh Mohamed-bin-Arahmeh, Headman of the Bushri tribe and Zabit of the Nakhli-i-Amir village, and he delivered the same to Mulla Ahmed-bin-Mulla Abdullah, Imam of the mosque at Nakhli-i-Amir, who again sold them at Lingah to Saad-bin-Abdullah Someiti, a diver residing at Lingah, who was mentioned by Mullah Shokruallah, for a sum of 1,500 dollars, and paid the amount to Sheikh Mohamed-bin-Arahmeh aforesaid. Sheikh Mohamed-bin-Arahmeh paid 500 dollars to the murderers and distributed the balance between himself and the Sowlet-ul-Mulk, Zabit of Bustek; and something was also received by Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Mohamed, Headman of the Bushri tribe and Zabit of Taona port, but it is not known precisely how much was received by Sheikh Abdullah out of the 1,000 dollars taken by Sheikh Mohamed-bin-Arahmeh, or of the 500 dollars paid to the murderers.

The Sowlet-ul-Mulk, Zabit of Bustek, subsequently gave orders for the three men's arrest; and Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Mohamed Bushri, Zabit of Taona, thereupon captured the three murderers and made them over to the Sowlet-ul-Mulk at Bustek, and they remained in confinement for some time; but all of the three men escaped later. The Sowlet-ul-Mulk's Tofangchis went in their pursuit, and began firing upon them. Mohamed-bin-Jasim remained where he was in fear and was arrested. Several shots were fired at the two brothers, and Ahmed was hit, but Gheithoo escaped. Thinking that the person shot had died, the Tofangchis only took Mohamed and kept him in confinement at Bustek. When night came on Gheithoo returned to the spot where his brother had been shot, to find out if his brother had died or remained alive.



On reaching the place he found that his brother was alive, but was unable to walk, having received a bullet in his foot. He took him on his shoulder and remained in hiding on a mountain appertaining to Nakhli-i-Amir for a few days until his brother recovered.

The Sowlet-ul-Mulk subsequently sent Mohamed-bin-Jasim as a prisoner to Shiraz, where he was kept in confinement.

Saad-bin-Abdullah Someiti has no relationship with Sheikh Abdullah, Zabit of Taona, nor was he a participator in the piracy; he merely purchased the pearls from Mulla Ahmed-bin-Mulla Abdullah Bushri, Imam of the mosque at Nakhli-i-Amir.

Sheikh Mohamed-bin-Arahmeh-bin-Saleh, Headman of the Bushri tribe and Zabit of Nakhli-i-Amir village, is a cousin of Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Mohamed-bin-Saleh, Headman of the Bushri tribe and Zabit of Taona. Sheikh Mohamed-bin-Arahmeh, Zabit of Nakhli-i-Amir, and Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Mohamed, Zabit of Taona, are both Headmen of the Bushri tribe, but have a grudge against one another resulting from the desire of each for supremacy.

The three murderers are of the Bushri tribe and have maternal relationship with Sheikh Mohamed-bin-Arahmeh and Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Mohamed Bushri. It is not possible to obtain complete proof [to show] how much of the stolen property was received by Sheikh Mohamed-bin-Arahmeh and how much by Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Mohamed Bushri and others, because the persons having information are unable to reveal it for fear of the Sheikhs and the murderers; and they [seldom] say a little, and even that to the persons whom they may think trustworthy.

Ahmed and Gheithoo, sons of Jasim, had proceeded to the pearl banks on the Sambook of Sheikh Salem-bin-Mohamed Al-i-Ali. But a quarrel having taken place between Sheikh Mohamed-bin-Arahmeh, Zabit of Nakhli-i-Amir, and Sheikh Abdullah, Zabit of Taona, they returned from the pearl banks and went to Nakhli-i-Amir, and they had not returned [to the pearl banks] up to the 22nd August, 1908. I have heard that the divers of the Shibkuh ports finish their operations on the 12th September, 1908, and it does not seem, under these circumstances, [sic] to take measures with a view to capturing the pirates in the pearl banks.

I have received the photo alleged to be that of one of the persons concerned in the piracy, and am keeping it for the present as a precaution, and shall return it after having done with it.

Inclosure 3 in No. 390.

*Khan Sahib Agha Bedr to Major Cox.*

(Translation.)

*Lingah, August 25, 1908.*

With reference to this Agency report dated the 25th August, 1908, I have heard that Mohamed-bin-Jasim Bushri, Resident of the Nakhli-i-Amir, who was among the murderers of the people of Abu Thabi, and who was the brother of Ahmed and Gheithoo and had been sent by the Sowlet-ul-Mulk, Zabit of Bustek, as a prisoner to Shiraz, where he remained in confinement for some time, has recently arrived at Keis Island in a boom belonging to the people of Nakhli-i-Amir.

According to the statement made by Mohamed-bin-Jasim to certain individuals at Heis, he had been tried about seven times at Shiraz while he was in prison, and he had answered during all of them that he had committed no murder and piracy; that on the last occasion he was taken to a certain place where his photo was taken; that he was taken back to prison afterwards, and the Sowlet-ul-Mulk's employé Amin Ghaffar Busteki at Shiraz paid 200 tomans and released him, and sent him to a [public] bath; that he arrived at Bushire from Shiraz on foot in the beginning of Rajab, met Sheikh Mohamed Hassan of Keis at Bushire, went in his company to the Government House, Charburj, stayed there for a day, and came from Bushire on foot to Nakhli-i-Taqi, where he embarked on the boom chartered by the brother of Amin-bin-Ali, and came to the Keis Island and stopped there for one day with Sheikh Ahmed Mohamed Al-i-Ali, Zabit of the island, and then proceeded to Taona, staying there for a couple of days, and then leaving for the Nakhli-i-Amir village.

Also, Zeinal Ghaffar, brother of Amin Ghaffar, has written from Bustek to Sheikh Ahmed-bin-Rashed Marzooqi, Zabit of Moghu, that Amin Ghaffar had lent a sum of 200 tomans to Mohamed-bin-Jasim Bushri, of Nakhli-i-Amir, at Shiraz [on the condition] that he [Sheikh Ahmed] should send him [Mohamed-bin-Jasim] to the pearl fisheries and so recover the amount.

I have heard this news from reliable persons.

Inclosure 4 in No. 390.

*Khan Sahib Agha Bedr to Major Cox.*

(Translation.)

*Lingah, August 25, 1908.*

REFERRING to my report dated the 25th August, 1908, I beg to state, for your further information, that Sheikh Mohamed-bin-Arahmeh-bin-Saleh, Headman of the Bushri tribe, who is the Zabit of the Nakhli-i-Amir village, and his community are confederates of, and obedient to, Sheikh Ahmed-bin-Rashed Marzooqi, Zabit of the Moghu port. More especially so are the three murderers.

Arrangement should be made, if possible, to demand the murderers from Sheikh Ahmed-bin-Rashed aforesaid, because all the actions taken by Sheikh Mohamed-bin-Arahmeh Bushri and [the people of] Nakhli-i-Amir are [under] Sheikh Ahmed-bin-Rashed's control and supervision.

Inclosure 5 in No. 390.

*Sir G. Barclay to Ala-es-Sultaneh.*

Your Highness,

*Tehran, December 1, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to address your Highness on the subject of the murder of Abu Thabi subjects by the inhabitants of Taona, to which reference was made in conversation with your Highness by Abbas Kuli Khan on the 11th instant. Your Highness on that occasion stated that if the note which the Persian Government had addressed to His Majesty's Legation were referred to, it would be seen that the Persian Government had done all that was possible in this case.

I venture to point out to your Highness that in their note of the 2nd May last the Persian Government, while unwilling to give the Governor-General of the Gulf Ports effective control over the whole littoral of the Gulf, undertook to do their utmost to maintain order in the district of Shibkuh, and to settle satisfactorily the various cases mentioned in Mr. Marling's note of the 7th April, among which was the case of the Taona murders.

Since that date, however, nothing has been done, and it has, moreover, come to my knowledge that two of the murderers, who were stated by Mushir-ed-Dowleh in his communication of the 13th March, 1906, to be dead, are, in fact, alive, and have been seen at the pearl fisheries. These men have now retired inland to Nakhli-i-Amir.

While expressing the hope that it may be found possible, by the assistance of the local authorities, to effect the arrest of these men, I most urgently impress upon your Highness the necessity of giving effect to the repeated representations which have been addressed to the Persian Government by this Legation by arriving at a speedy settlement of the question of compensation to the families of the murdered persons.

I avail, &c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[44429]

No. 391.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 307.)

Sir,

*Tehran, December 3, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith the usual monthly summary of events in Persia for the last four weeks.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. BARCLAY.



## Inclosure in No. 391.

No. 12.—*Monthly Summary of Events.**Tehran.**Shah and Constitution.*

ON the 7th November an artificial demonstration was organized by the Sepahsalar (Amir Bahadur Jang), the Prime Minister (Mushir-es-Sultaneh), Naib-es-Sultaneh, and other reactionaries, in which the leading Mujtehed, Sheikh Fazlullah, took part. Petitions, prepared beforehand, were signed by the persons assembled at Bagh-i-Shah, the Cabinet Ministers included, praying His Majesty not to reintroduce the Medjliss on the ground that it was contrary to Islamic law.

On the 8th November the British and Russian Ministers sent an identic Memorandum to the Minister for Foreign Affairs urging the Shah to fulfil his numerous promises to re-establish the Constitution, on the ground that it would be the best way to restore order at Tabreez and elsewhere.

On the 11th November M. de Hartwig had an audience of the Shah for the purpose of urging His Majesty to convoke an elected body of representatives. Sir George Barclay had an audience of His Majesty the following day, at which he used language of a similar nature.

M. de Hartwig, who again saw the Shah on the 14th November to introduce M. Sabline, the newly-arrived First Secretary, and to take leave of His Majesty, again urged the Shah to re-establish a Medjliss. On the 12th and 13th November Seyed Ali Yezdi, a prominent mollah, made a demonstration in favour of a re-establishment of the Medjliss, and on the 14th and 15th he presented Petitions in this sense to all the Legations.

On the 19th November renewed demonstrations were made at Bagh-i-Shah against the constitutional régime, and the Shah on this occasion issued a Rescript in which the following passage occurs: "Now that you have shown that the institution of a Medjliss is contrary to the laws of Islam . . . we also have entirely given up this idea, and in future such a Medjliss will not even be mentioned."

The British and Russian Legations, having heard of this Rescript, addressed a joint note to the Foreign Minister on the subject on the 22nd November. The Rescript was withdrawn the following day, and on the 25th November the Foreign Minister called on Sir George Barclay to explain, by the Shah's orders, that it was not official, and merely referred to the last Medjliss. The British and Russian dragomans had an audience of the Shah on the 28th November in order to discuss the situation frankly with His Majesty.

A Council of State, composed of some forty persons chosen by the Shah, having been instituted in order to take the place of the Medjliss, was inaugurated on the 29th November.

On the 1st December the Shah's Rescript to the clergy of the 19th November, of which a passage is quoted above, was posted all over Tehran by Government officials. The same night energetic representations were made by the British and Russian Legations on the subject, and the Shah replied the following day through the Foreign Minister that the Rescript which had been posted up without his knowledge would immediately be removed, and that the persons responsible for this act would be punished. The posters were removed during the course of the morning.

*General News.*

On the 9th November, on the occasion of the anniversary of the King's birthday, the usual ceremonial was observed. In the evening Sir George Barclay gave a dinner to the Cabinet Ministers.

M. de Sturler, the Dutch Minister, left on the 10th November on transfer to Athens.

M. Sabline arrived on the 11th November, and took charge of the Russian Legation on the 15th November, when M. de Hartwig left for St. Petersburg.

Nassouhi Bey, the Turkish Ambassador, left on the 14th November, and Cherefedin Bey, the First Secretary, took charge.

The British and Russian Legations made joint representations to the Persian Government, through their dragomans, on the subject of the attack by Royalist troops near Tabreez on an Armenian village, when a number of Armenians were killed and wounded. (See under Tabreez.)

During the course of the month Hajji Hussein Agha, Amin-uz-Zerb, took refuge at the Russian Legation in consequence of complications arising out of his immense indebtedness to the Russian Bank. He owes the Russian Bank about 500,000*l.* and the Imperial Bank 100,000*l.*

Mr. Mornard, the Administrator of Customs, left for Enzeli in connection with the burning down of part of the custom-house by Nationalists, and at the same time to make arrangements with M. Padjoursky, the Russian Chief Engineer, for the new port works at Enzeli, where it is proposed to erect the custom-house.

The son of Vekil-ed-Dowleh, referred to in paragraph 1 of the last summary, took refuge at the Russian Legation shortly after his father was beaten at Bagh-i-Shah and expelled to Kashan. The Russian Legation obtained a guarantee from the Shah for his safety, and a pardon for his father.

Referring to Summary No. 9 of the 10th September, and to the action taken by the Government regarding the property known as Saadabad, which had been in the possession of the Zil-es-Sultan for some years and was then handed over to his sister Banou Ozma, it has come to the knowledge of the Legation that the Shah recently issued a Decree reinstating the Zil-es-Sultan. The Russian Legation, however, in support of Banou Ozma, whose properties are all mortgaged to the Russian Bank against her debt to that establishment, made energetic representations on the subject, and, in fact, resisted by force an attempt made by the servants of Zil-es-Sultan, accompanied by Government officials, to regain possession of the property. The British and Russian Legations have exchanged views on the subject, and an entire agreement has been come to between them. It is probable that part of the property belongs to the Zil and a part to his sister. When the Zil-es-Sultan produces his documents, or authorizes his agent to represent him in the matter, the two Legations will come to an amicable arrangement on the subject.

The Prince Farman Farma, who is still in Tehran, is the most likely candidate for the post of Prime Minister should the Shah eventually decide to change his present frankly reactionary policy. Recent developments at Meshed, due no doubt to the presence there of the Tehran Mujtehed, Seyed Mohammed, and the impossibility of gaining an entry into Tabreez, so far experienced by the Ain-ed-Dowleh, supported by the Shah's troops, added to the growing financial distress, and repeated representations of the British and Russian Legations should in time have the desired effect.

(Signed) G. P. CHURCHILL,  
*Oriental Secretary.*

December 2, 1908.

*Tabreez.*

His Majesty's Consul-General arrived from Urumia on the 9th November. On the 11th November he reported that a reinforcement of 400 cavalry was said to have reached the Governor-General at Basminch. On the 13th some of the Royalist reinforcements under Semsam Khan, disobeying the Governor-General's orders, attacked Mujambar and killed and wounded several Armenians; 300 Persian Cossacks, with six guns, also joined the Royalist camp on this day, but Mr. Wratishaw reported that Tabreez was not impressed by their arrival. On the 16th November Maragha was occupied by a force of Nationalists, but on the 30th November they were reported to have been driven out and to have returned to Tabreez. A local Assembly was re-established at Dilman (Salmas) on the 13th, and on the 23rd Bonab, on the eastern shore of Lake Urumia, was occupied by Nationalists, after a fight with the Chahardowleh horsemen. On the 18th November the Nationalists telegraphed to the Parliaments of London, Paris, and St. Petersburg protesting against the false reports of danger to foreign subjects. Mr. Wratishaw reported at this time that the Chief Engineer of the Russian road was at Julfa engaged in spreading alarming and absurd reports about the situation at Tabreez, and that the Russian Consul-General, whose one idea was to bring about Russian occupation, was similarly telegraphing alarmist and exaggerated reports.



*Resht.*

1. The Salar-ed-Dowleh, brother of the Shah, passed through Resht on his way to Warsaw, early in November. He stayed at the house of the Munshi of the Russian Consulate, a fact which caused much comment.

2. Sepahdar, until recently commander of the Royalist forces at Tabreez, arrived here hurriedly from Azerbaijan early in November on his way to Tunekabun, where two of his sons were on the verge of a conflict for the Deputy Governorship.

3. The Governor-General's expedition to Talish ended in complete failure. His troops ravaged the country as they went, in some places destroying the property of Russian subjects. At Kerganrud, on the 15th November, they were attacked by the inhabitants and fled, losing a gun. Mr. Rabino is of opinion that the expedition was not necessary, as the Kerganrudis had repeatedly declared their loyalty and their willingness to accept any Governor except Serdar Amjad, at whose hands they had been much oppressed in the past.

4. On the 15th November the Customs buildings at Enzeli were set fire to, but the fire was put out before much damage was done. It is supposed to have been the work of Nationalists, who wished to destroy a large consignment of arms and ammunition intended for the Shah which was in the Customs building. Some 180 rifles were destroyed.

*Meshed.*

1. The Russian Consul-General recently stated quite openly that the Russians would undoubtedly restore order in Tabreez, and the only question causing anxiety was the safety of Europeans until the troops arrived.

2. A letter, containing a strong attack on the Shah in the name of the Kerbela priests and calling on the people of Khorassan to rise, was circulated here in October and caused much excitement. The Russians, owing to their intervention in the attempt to suppress the circulation of this letter, were credited with supporting the Shah and the reactionary party. At the instance of the Russian Consul-General, the photographer's house, in which copies of the letter were being photographed for circulation, was locked up by the local authorities. Many copies were, however, circulated.

3. Telegraphic reports from Meshed state that some 4,000 students assembled at the Shrine on the 29th November and had the bazaars closed. Next day a riot occurred, owing to the arrest of a prominent revolutionary, and the students and troops exchanged shots. On the 1st December the situation was serious, the numbers of the revolutionaries had increased, many tradesmen having joined the students, and troops were picketing the streets.

4. The change in the Governorship of Seistan and Kain has been much talked about, and our failure to maintain the Shaikat-ul-Mulk unfavourably commented on.

5. Captain Watson, I.M.S., arrived on the 25th October and left on the 1st November in company with Major Sykes for Bujnurd and Astrabad.

*Astrabad.*

The Russian Legation has received telegraphic information from Astrabad that disturbances have broken out there and that the Governor had threatened to bombard the town.

*Ispahan.*

1. Lieutenant Ranking left for Hamadan on the 26th October.

2. On the 8th November Ispahan was placed under martial law, apparently with the object of preventing the priests from exciting the people against the authorities. The town has remained quiet.

3. About the 20th November the priests received a telegram from the reactionary priests in Tehran stating that the Shah had given up all idea of having a Constitution. The telegram was not made public in Ispahan.

4. The roads, the Bakhtiari road excepted, continue to be infested with robbers. A robbery of thirty camels with their loads was reported on the 17th instant near Yezdikhast. Twenty Cossacks sent to Bafk from Yezd were ambuscaded by robbers and deprived of all their belongings, except two rifles and such of their ponies as were branded.

5. It is reported that the Bakhtiari Ilkhani has been dismissed by the Shah.

*Yezd.*

The people of Taft recently attacked twenty-five horsemen sent to collect revenue, beat them, deprived them of their rifles and clothing, and detained several as hostages to prevent the Governor arresting any Taftis who may visit Yezd. The Taftis have now begun to levy contributions on passing caravans.

*Seistan.*

1. The Karguzar informed His Majesty's Vice-Consul officially on the 24th September of the appointment of Hashmat-ul-Mulk as Governor of Kain, of Sartip Mir Masum as Deputy Governor of Kain, and of Sartip Mohammed Reza as Deputy Governor of Seistan. The Shaikat hopes to make an attempt to regain the Governorship next Norouz (March).

2. Ten Russian Cossacks left on the 1st October for Meshed escorting specie from the Russian Bank. Two or three Cossacks had also left a day or two previously for Meshed.

*Kerman.*

M. Mashal, a Turkish subject and agent of a Manchester firm, was robbed at Shams on the 23rd October. The robbers are being pursued.

*Kermanshah.*

1. Lieutenant Williams, who had been purchasing mules at Kermanshah, left for Bagdad on the 18th October.

2. Captain Lorimer arrived on the 3rd November and Lieutenant Ranking on the 13th from Ispahan. Both officers left for Shuster on the 15th.

3. The Kallur and the Guran tribes were in the middle of November occupying Ser-i-Pul, one march from Kasr-i-Shirin, with a view to attacking Semsam-ul-Mamalek, Chief of the Senjabi tribe, who is Governor of Kasr-i-Shirin.

*Shiraz.*

1. Sixty-four men of the Buz-Chalu regiment entered the Consulate on the 14th October and refused to leave until the arrears of two years' pay had been given them. His Majesty's Acting Consul did not intervene, but all left by the 21st October, the Persian authorities having paid them in full.

2. The Kamareh regiment, 600 strong, arrived about the 20th October.

3. His Majesty's Resident left for Bushire on the 21st October.

4. The district of Lar is reported to be terrorized by Seyed Abdul Hussein Lari, who has announced that to pay revenue to the present Shah is contrary to Islam.

5. Robberies are still of frequent occurrence on both the Ispahan and Bushire roads. A post was recently robbed near Sivend and the driver of the postal waggon brutally murdered. Several robberies have also occurred in the immediate neighbourhood of the town.

*PERSIAN GULF.**Bushire.*

1. Moaziz-ed-Dowleh, the new Governor of the Gulf ports, arrived on the 11th October.

2. Thirty-five Persian Parsees arrived on the 25th October from Taft and Nasratabad on their way to India. They were emigrating in consequence of the oppression of the Governor of Taft. On their way to Bushire they had been robbed of everything.

3. Ahmed Khan, Zabit of Angali, having undertaken before the Governor to protect caravans and goods, the Shif route to Shiraz has been reopened and is being used.

4. The Resident arrived from Shiraz on the 30th October.

5. Copies of telegrams from Kerbela denouncing the Shah's actions have been posted up in the streets. In one case "Punch's" cartoon of the Shah showing his forcible dissolution of Parliament was posted above the copy of the telegrams.



*Bunder Abbas.*

1. Three Russian Cossacks and four horses left for Bushire on the 7th October.
2. The Russian steam-ship "Euphrates" arrived from Bussorah on the 15th October and left next day for Odessa. M. Oyseenko, the Russian Consul, and two Russian Cossacks, left for Russia by her. M. Mathiew, Assistant to the Russian Consul, remains at Bunder Abbas with one Cossack. He proposes to go to Bushire.
3. Captain Shakespear took over charge of the Consulate on the 25th November.

*Mohammerah.*

1. M. Gratama on the 20th October announced his appointment as a Royal Consul for the Netherlands for Arabistan, Luristan, and Kurdistan.
2. During October the Shuster-Dizful road was reported to be very unsafe.
3. At the end of October Arab contingents were assembling for an expedition against the Hawizeh tribes, who were in rebellion.

(Signed) C. B. STOKES, Major,  
Military Attaché.

[44432]

No. 392.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 310.)

Sir,

*Tehran, December 4, 1908.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 404 of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a Memorandum drawn up by Mr. Churchill giving an account of his and M. Baranowsky's audience of the Shah on the 28th ultimo.

As reported in my telegram No. 408 of the 1st instant, the Council, whose institution the Shah announced to the two dragomans and which His Majesty was urged to intrust with the framing of an electoral law, is composed for the most part of men of reactionary views, and unless the Shah can be induced to summon to it men of more liberal views, it will be vain to look to it for any assistance towards the revival of the Constitutional régime.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

P.S.—I have just seen a translation of the invitation issued by the Grand Vizier to the members of the Council called the High Medjliss of State, bidding them to attend its meetings. Their functions are stated to be general supervision over the Ministers and Provincial Governors, and "to acquaint themselves with the Shah's commands and the duties laid down for them."

G. B.

Inclosure in No. 392.

*Memorandum by Mr. Churchill.*

M. BARANOWSKY and I were received by the Shah this morning at 11:30 in an upper room of the building in Bagh-i-Shah, formerly used for the custody of political prisoners. No one was present at the audience besides the Shah and ourselves.

M. Baranowsky began, as arranged between us, by saying that we had come on behalf of the British Minister and the Russian Chargé d'Affaires to ask His Majesty what steps he had taken to fulfil his promises. The Shah replied that his answer to this inquiry was a long one, and required papers which he had not at hand for the moment, and the explanations which he wanted to give were so lengthy that he would send his Minister for Foreign Affairs to the British and Russian Legations to make them.

I then said to the Shah that the reason M. Baranowsky and I had been sent to His Majesty was that it was hoped that His Majesty would speak frankly to us and tell us his views without reserve. We ourselves proposed to speak with equal frankness, and we, in fact, thought we could show His Majesty that the views and interests of the British and Russian Governments were identical with His Majesty's. The Shah

replied that he was quite ready to speak frankly, but the difficulty was that no one listened to him. I said that every one agreed with His Majesty that the first Medjliss was a failure, and no one desired to bring back the disorders of the régime which he had put an end to, but that the present régime was quite as bad, if not worse, and could not be allowed to continue. The Shah reiterated that no one listened to him, and said that he intended to keep his promises. I then took from my pocket his recent Rescript, and said that his latest pronouncement did not appear to bear this out, but the Shah, interrupting, took the paper from me, and, in a rather irritated manner, endeavoured to explain that the phrase "we will not even mention such a Medjliss" referred to the last Assembly, and observed that I apparently could not read Persian.

M. Baranowsky then urged the Shah, in the most emphatic manner, to keep his promises as the only means of re-establishing order and calming Tabreez. He said that the danger of bast was always present and that no one desired a Medjliss such as the last, but that a large section of the people were resolved to have a parliamentary régime. The Shah, in reply, said that, on the other hand, most of the people were opposed to it, and if he issued orders for elections to-day there would certainly be bloodshed to-morrow. I then said to His Majesty that this was the surest proof of the self-interested policy pursued by His Majesty's courtiers. If they told him that the people were opposed to a Medjliss they had told him that which was not true. The Shah made a show of resenting this imputation, and spoke up for his courtiers rather sharply. M. Baranowsky again urged the Shah to keep his promises, and when His Majesty spoke of the Council which was to meet the following day, M. Baranowsky pointed out that a body chosen by the Shah was not at all what had been promised, and that they must be elected by the people. The Shah repeated that the majority of the people were against a Medjliss; M. Baranowsky merely replied, "No, this is not the case," to which the Shah made no answer. M. Baranowsky, continuing, said that the best course for His Majesty was to order this new Council to draw up an electoral law by which an Assembly would be convened composed of intelligent deputies who would co-operate with the Ministers in the much-needed work of reform. The Medjliss would not be composed of shopkeepers and ignorant men as before, and no one wanted "Anjumens" or a free press such as the last.

The Shah said he would think over this proposal and talk over the matter with those who so strongly opposed the Medjliss.

I said that if His Majesty would realize how dangerous a continuance of the present régime was, and how urgent it was, in his own interests, to inaugurate a new one, and in fact to take the lead in a new régime which should be directed towards the much-needed reforms, it would no longer be necessary for him to stay at Bagh-i-Shah. The Shah emphatically declared that he was by no means afraid to return to the Palace in town; he stayed at Bagh-i-Shah because he liked the place. M. Baranowsky again pressed to know definitely whether His Majesty had decided to intrust the new Council with the work of elaborating an electoral law, and the Shah repeated that after considering the matter and discussing it with those who opposed the re-establishment of an elected Medjliss, he would give a reply to the British Minister and Russian Chargé d'Affaires through his Minister for Foreign Affairs.

(Signed) G. P. CHURCHILL.

*Tehran, November 28, 1908.*

[44433]

No. 393.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 311. Secret.)

Sir,

*Tehran, December 4, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith diaries of the Military Attaché to His Majesty's Consulate-General at Meshed, Nos. 43 to 47 inclusive.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.



## Inclosure 1 in No. 393.

No. 43.—*Diary of Military Attaché, Meshed, for week ending October 24, 1908.**Summary of News.*

(Secret.)

ACCORDING to our Merv correspondent, General Mishchenko arrived there from Askabad, made a brief inspection of the troops, and went on towards Tashkent without visiting Kushk. This curtailment of his official programme is only what might be expected after his wound at Askabad. The fact that he was able to inspect the Merv troops at all shows that his wound is not serious.

2. Now that the drill season is over, time-expired men are beginning to leave Turkestan. Merv reports the passing of 500 westwards, which is confirmed by Krasnovodsk, though it seems doubtful if the whole 500 passed through Krasnovodsk. Charjui reports the departure of 400 Cossacks from the Oxus posts.

3. Merv reports the arrival of 700 infantry from the west; these appear to be men of the Merv garrison, who have been at Askabad for the manoeuvres.

4. The "Transcaspian Review" contains a strangely perverted account of the Jamshedi affair, completely ignoring the fact that the Jamshedis were thoroughly dissatisfied with their experiences in Russian territory, and that most of them have gone back to Afghanistan.

*"Transcaspian Review."*

October 8.—The 1908 cotton crop of the Merv district was 1,200,000 poods, the selling price of which was 3 r. 10 k. per pood.

October 11.—This year 15,000 Jamshedis left Afghanistan and entered the Kushk district and became Russian subjects. They did this because the Afghans were always trying to provoke them against the Russians, and finally the Afghans murdered their Khan; 15,000 Jamshedis have come over up to the present, but a lot more are expected shortly. Captain Peresviet Soltan has been attached to the staff of the Governor of Kushk, to be in special charge of these Jamshedis.

October 12.—On the 6th October there were 83 cases (patients) in the Tashkent city cholera hospital; of these, 4 were discharged and 5 died (on that day). Since the beginning of the outbreak there have been 232 admissions to the Tashkent cholera hospital; of whom 60 have recovered and 98 have died.

October 14.—Eight hundred new goods waggons have been received by the Tashkent Railway, and some hundreds more are coming shortly.

*Turkestan News.*

October 6.—The Amu Darya flotilla, far from paying its way, has been a heavy loss to Government, as the following figures show:—

*AMU Darya Flotilla.*

	Expenditure.	Receipt.	Loss.
1904 .. .. .	440,687	106,195	334,492
1905 .. .. .	439,493	88,531	350,962
1906 .. .. .	425,493	90,710	334,781
1907 .. .. .	423,184	110,882	312,302
1908 .. .. .	440,000	150,000	290,000*

\* Estimated loss for 1908.

*Krasnovodsk Report.*

The following railway material has been sent E.:—

October 3.—Eleven trucks of sleepers.

October 4.—Eight trucks of sleepers.

October 6.—Ten trucks of sleepers.

October 8.—Nine trucks of sleepers.

October 5.—Twenty Cossacks for the 2nd (Urai) Regiment came in by steamer and left E.

October 8.—A party of time-expired men, said to be infantry soldiers from Samarkand and Tashkent, came in by rail during the night and left by steamer in the early morning. I did not see them.

*Askabad Report.*

October 10.—The Governor-General of Turkestan has been shot at and wounded by some soldiers during a parade here.

*Merv Report.*

October 4.—Some 500 soldiers, including a number of men of the 2nd Railway Battalion, passed through W. I ascertained that these were time-expired men.

October 5.—Three hundred men of the 7th Transcaspian Battalion and Sapper Battalion came in from W.

October 6.—The Governor-General of Turkestan arrived from Askabad. It was said that he had been wounded in Askabad, but he inspected the troops of the garrison here. He left by rail W. the same day.

October 6.—Forty trucks of dry forage sent to Kushk.

October 8.—Four trucks of rails came in from W. and went through to Kushk branch.

October 11.—Four hundred infantry came in from W. These were men of the 7th Transcaspian and Merv Reserve Battalions, with a machine-gun detachment of the 6th Battalion.

October 13.—Sixteen trucks forage came in from W.

*Charjui Report.*

October 10.—Arrivals from up stream say that the Russians are collecting material at Kerki and elsewhere, with the object of building a bridge across the Oxus somewhere near Kilif. (Manoeuvres have perhaps given rise to this report.—H. S.).

October 15.—Four hundred Cossacks came in by steamer from up stream; 200 of these left by rail E., the remaining 200 are waiting here.

(Signed) H. SMYTH, Captain,  
Military Attaché.

Meshed, October 24, 1908.

## Inclosure 2 in No. 393.

No. 44.—*Diary of Military Attaché, Meshed, for week ending October 31, 1908.**Summary of News.*

(Secret.)

ALL manoeuvres are over, and reports from Askabad, Merv, Kerki, and Samarkand, show the garrisons to be normal.

2. Our Askabad correspondent has some interesting remarks on the manoeuvres near Gaudan, and the reason why General Mishchenko was shot. He says that the General was shot by men of the Railway Battalion, whereas our previous information was that men of the Sapper Battalion shot him; it is easy to see how the confusion might arise, railway soldiers being practically sappers.

3. Our Termez agent gives some useful details of the march of the Termez troops from Termez to Kilif. From this, and other accounts, of the marching and manoeuvre of the Turkestan troops, it seems as if they were very deficient in mobility and general arrangements, and that their discipline is of a low order.

4. The Merv and Sarakhs districts are still unsafe on account of robbers—the Tejen-Sarakhs road having to be guarded by specially raised Turcoman levies.

5. Samarkand reports the arrival there of five Jamshedi Chiefs, including the notorious Said Ahmad Beg, with twenty-four followers. He says that two Elders have gone on to Tashkent too. These Jamshedis have taken about three weeks travelling



from Merv to Samarkand by rail, so they must have broken the journey, probably at Bokhara.

6. The C. A. Railway between Merv and Bairam Ali is being eroded by the Murghab irrigation water to such an extent that the embankment and bridges are both on the point of collapsing; 2 versts of the T. O. Railway are under water too, and related efforts are being hastily made to prevent another large section of this railway being washed away, as occurred a few months ago.

#### *"Transcaspian Review."*

October 15.—From the 28th September to the 5th October five cases of cholera occurred at Bairam Ali.

October 16.—On the 7th November there will be a review at Askabad of the reservists in the district.

October 17.—General Mishchenko arrived in Tashkent on the 13th October.

October 21.—The whole of the earthwork of the railway between Merv and Bairam Ali is in a bad state, its foundations having been washed out by the water from the irrigation works. The bridge near the village of Geok Tepe (not the famous Geok Tepe, of course) is in imminent danger of collapsing.

#### *Turkestan News.*

October 16.—At Tashkent, on the 12th October, there were fifty-nine cases of cholera in hospital. Six fresh cases were admitted during the day, four were discharged cured, three died, fifty-eight remained.

October 17.—The Syr Darya is very high, and 2 versts of the Tashkent Railway have been flooded near the station of Kemishli Bash. The sum of 31,200 roubles has been granted to strengthen the embankment at this point.

October 18.—General Pokotilo has been appointed Governor-General of the Ural Province.

#### *Krasnovodsk Report.*

The following time-expired men have passed through to Russia:—

October 15.—Four Kavkaz Cossacks, four men 2nd Artillery Brigade, nine Transcaspian Infantry.

October 16.—Four men of the Termez garrison.

October 17.—Five Kavkaz Cossacks.

October 19.—Eight men of the "Kushk" corps.

The following material has been sent E.:—

October 13.—Fourteen trucks of sleepers.

October 15.—Sixteen trucks of sleepers, 2 trucks of rails.

October 16.—Eleven trucks of sleepers, 4 trucks of rails.

October 18.—Five trucks of planks and building material.

October 20.—Two trucks of sleepers, 1 truck of rails.

October 14.—Fifty men of the 1st Railway Battalion came in from E.

#### *Askabad Report.*

October 10.—On the occasion of the manœuvres near Gaodan, when the Governor-General was wounded, the Askabad troops were accompanied by 400 transport carts and 200 followers (besides cart drivers). The soldiers say that the Governor-General was shot by some men of the Railway Battalion, and that they shot him because of the harsh manner in which he treated troops when on manœuvres, forcing them to spend several days on end over an operation such as an attack, or mountain crossings, without adequate arrangements for their shelter, food, or water.

The troops are now all in from the camps, and the garrison consists of:—

#### *Garrison of Askabad—*

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Transcaspian Battalion, Geok Tepe Reserve Battalion, all up to strength, i.e., about 800 men each.

Temn Cossacks, 400 strong.

1st Railway Battalion, 500 strong.

A Field Battery, with Q.F. guns. There is another Field Battery too, but I could not make them out very clearly (Reserve Battery).

#### *Sarakhs Report.*

October 10 to 17.—Parties of infantry have been marching out from Sarakhs to various Turcoman encampments, and have searched for stolen goods, but without result.

The robbers are still at large in this and the Merv districts, and the road from Tejen to Sarakhs is so unsafe that the Governor of Sarakhs has engaged a special force of Turcomans at 30 roubles per man per month, to patrol the road.

The relieved Cossacks from Karez have gone on to Tejen.

#### *Merv Report.*

October 18.—A special train passed through E. carrying 400 men of the 1st and 2nd Railway Battalions; these men had come from duty at Askabad camp.

October 19.—An accident has occurred on the Kushk line; a passenger train was derailed, 20 passengers injured, and 10 carriages badly damaged.

October 21.—Twenty men of the Zerabulak Battalion passed E.

October 22.—Thirty Kavkaz Cossacks left by Kushk train.

By the 12th October, the last of the Merv troops had left Askabad and returned to Merv. The whole of the Merv garrison is now present at Merv, and is of normal strength. Each Infantry Battalion at Merv, and at Askabad too, has 40 horses for its scouts, besides horses for its machine-guns and their detachments.

#### *Kerki Report.*

October 2.—The Kerki troops have returned from the manœuvres at Kilif, and the present strength of the garrison of Kerki is:—

19th and 20th Turkestan Battalions.

400 men, 4th (Orenburg) Cossacks.

2 Batteries of Artillery, one of which was the 2nd Field Battery.

A detachment of mounted Frontier Guard.

Kerki Fortress Company, 400 strong, with 8 heavy guns

Machine-gun Company, 200 strong, with 12 machine-guns } In the fort.

I was only passing through Kerki, and had not much time to check these troops, so I am not able to give their numbers in more detail, or to supply full particulars as to the artillery.

#### *Termez Report.*

September 28.—News has been received from Mazar-i-Sharif that Muhamad Sarwar Khan was arrested shortly after his return there (from Russian territory) and sent to Cabul.

When the Termez troops marched for Kilif they took four days to get off from the place, counting from the time the first party marched off to the time the last party left, they had so much trouble with their transport and general arrangements.

The following is the detail of the troops who marched to Kilif:—

Six hundred men of each of the four infantry battalions; each battalion left one company behind in Termez.

Each battalion had forty mounted scouts and two machine-guns with ten mounted men as detachment.

5th Field Battery, with eight guns.

2nd Orenburg Cossack Battery, with eight guns.

Termez Fortress Artillery Company, with four heavy guns; these guns are called by the Russians "25-groove guns" (he gives a sketch of the muzzle of the gun, by which it appears to be a 6-inch gun.—H. S.).

Machine-gun company, 200 men, with twenty-four pack machine guns; two guns were carried on one horse; the ammunition was partly carried on horses, partly in carts.

Mounted frontier guard, 200 men.



This force had the following transport:—

Each infantry battalion had as authorized transport sixteen two-wheeled one-horse Government transport carts for soldiers' kits; these carts are supposed to carry 20 poods, but they really had about 25 poods on them. Four covered transport carts to carry the sick. One covered cart for medical staff and medical stores. Two transport carts for supply (see below for further details of supply). Besides this authorized transport each battalion had a miscellaneous collection of hired carts and camels as private transport. The infantry were in marching order, carrying rolled great-coat, haversack, water-bottle, &c.

As regards supply, contractors undertook the whole of the task of supplying the troops, the troops only drawing their supplies from the contractors and preparing them in their travelling camp kitchens and samovars. The contractors used local hired carts to bring in their supplies, but they were obliged to have 200 camels loaded with reserve provisions marching with the force.

Notice was given in advance to the officials of the Amir of Bokhara for them to have forage ready at all the halting places.

Besides the transport given above for the infantry, all other corps had their authorized proportion of one-horse two-wheeled carts. There were not enough Government horses for these carts, so 200 horses had to be hired for this purpose.

On the march the advance and rear-guard work was done by the mounted scouts and machine-gun detachments.

#### *Samarkand Report.*

October 10.—Fourteen cart-loads boxes rifle ammunition (twelve boxes per cart) and 35 cart-loads military stores received from Tashkent and placed in store here.

October 15.—Ten cart-loads gun ammunition and 6 cart-loads clothing received from Tashkent.

October 19.—The following Jamshedi Elders arrived here by train from Merv:—

Said Ahmad Beg.

Muhamad Said.

Ahmad Ali Khan, son of Alam Tosh Khan.

Nawa Khan.

Agha Jamshedi "Ishan" (Ishan means a certain rank of Mullah.—H. S.).

They were accompanied by twenty-four of their followers. The whole party has been accommodated in the city; they are being treated as guests by the Russians, being provided with lodging, food, and money, and having two police officers in attendance on them. Two more Elders have gone on to Tashkent.

These Jamshedis have asked the Russian Government for land to form a settlement in the Sarakhs district; the Russians are not willing to accede to this request.

All the Samarkand troops have returned to Samarkand from outside camps, &c., and their present strength is—

#### *Garrison of Samarkand—*

5th, 6th, 7th Turkestan Battalions, full strength; each has 80 horses and 4 machine-guns.

8th Turkestan Battalion has returned to Katta Kurghan.

Zerabulak Reserve Battalion, full strength; no horses or guns.

2nd Transcaspian Railway Battalion, 400 men.

2nd Ural Cossacks, 400 men.

Intendance, 50 men.

Prisoners' escort, 100 men.

4th Field Battery

6th Mountain Battery } Both full strength.

In the fort is the Fortress Artillery Company, 500 strong, with 8 Q.-F. field-guns, 8 machine-guns, 8 heavy machine-guns, 2 old heavy guns, 2 new heavy field-guns.

There are also stored away in the fort eight new Q.-F. field-guns and eight old pattern field-guns.

(Signed) H. SMYTH, Captain,  
Military Attaché.

Meshed, October 31 1908.

Inclosure 3 in No 393.

No. 45.—*Diary of Military Attaché, Meshed, for week ending November 7, 1908.*

#### *Summary of News.*

(Secret.)

It has been given out that the recruits for 1908-09 will arrive in Turkestan during the Russian months of November and December. Various preparations are being made for their reception, and some time-expired men are leaving their stations, but no general movement is yet reported.

2. Garrison reports from Merv and Charjui show both these garrisons to be fairly normal, Cossack and machine-gun establishments being particularly well up to strength, if not a little over it. Charjui explains something which has often puzzled me, i.e., why strong detachments of other corps are nearly always present at Charjui; agent says they are there for duty as escorts to trains and steamers.

3. The Russians are now putting a good deal of trust in the Turcomans. Sarakhs reports the raising of fresh Turcoman levies to protect the Tejen-Sarakhs road; and Charjui reports the passing eastwards of 100 Turcoman Cossacks—so agent calls them—for guard duty at isolated stations. All this points to a want of confidence in their own troops, and to fear of further outrages.

4. Sarakhs' agent, in reporting the arrival there of a new Intendance officer, reminds us of the large supply business done by the Russians at Sarakhs, wheat, barley, sheep, cattle, &c., being brought from Afghanistan and Persia, often from Afghanistan via Persia too, and stored at Sarakhs, whence they are sent on to Merv, Kushk, &c., as required.

#### *"Transcaspian Review."*

October 23.—On the 22nd October, goods train No. 91 was stopped 2 versts short of the Murghab (River) by a broken axle. Two waggons were damaged, and 30 sageens of the track were torn up.

October 28.—The Central Asian Railway authorities have been warned that a number of recruits will be arriving (via Krasnovodsk) during the months of November and December, and that Krasnovodsk and other stations must be prepared to supply them with hot meals, &c.

#### *Turkestan News.*

October 20.—At Tashkent, on the 16th instant, there were fifty-six cases of cholera in hospital. One fresh case was admitted during the day, five were discharged, two died, fifty remained.

Total since the beginning of the epidemic: 288 cases, of whom 102 have died and 135 have recovered.

October 21.—A Commission is going to Chieli, to inquire into the cause why the (T.O.) Railway has been so frequently washed away there, and why the Administration has been put to so much expense on that section with so little result.

October 24.—A railway bridge has been burned near Merv Station, causing a temporary interruption of the line.

#### *Askabad Report.*

October 17.—Five hundred "railway" soldiers left by rail E.; these soldiers are not recruits, they are going to their duty after the Askabad manœuvres. (See last week's Merv report, too, about these men.)

October 21.—Fifty men of the 8th Turkestan Battalion passed E.

#### *Sarakhs Report.*

October 17-22.—An Intendance officer has arrived from Tejen, and has taken over charge of the supply "godowns"; he will be in charge of the large business the Russians carry on here, in buying supplies of all kinds from Afghanistan and Persia.

Thirty more Turcoman sowars, i.e., sixty altogether, have been engaged at 30 roubles a month, to guard the Tejen-Sarakhs road against the attacks of brigands.

The strength of the garrison remains unchanged.



*Merv Report.*

October 23.—Thirty men of the 8th Turkestan Battalion passed E.  
 October 24.—Forty Kavkaz Cossacks came in from W.  
 October 28.—Nine trucks of forage came in from W.  
 Garrison of Merv:—

6th Transcaspian Battalion, 800 strong.  
 7th Transcaspian Battalion, 800 strong.  
 Merv Reserve Battalion, 500 strong.  
 Transcaspian Sapper Battalion, 400 strong.  
 4th Field Battery, 400 strong, with eight guns.  
 Kavkaz Cossack Regiment, 600 strong.  
 Intendence, 150 strong.  
 Medical Corps, 150 strong.  
 1st Railway Battalion, 100 strong.  
 Frontier Guard, 100 strong.

Each of the rifle battalions has machine guns and mounted scouts.  
 There is also a separate detachment of sixty men with horses and machine-guns (pack machine-gun company.—H. S.).  
 The total number of machine guns in Merv is seventeen.

*Charjui Report.*

October 17.—Three hundred soldiers, including a number of sappers, came in by steamer from up stream. Some of these seemed to be time-expired men.

October 18.—Four hundred men of the 4th Orenburg Cossacks, with one machine gun, came in from Tashkent (Tashkent reports their arrival from Orenburg in Diary No. 40): they stayed in Charjui four days, and then left for Kerki by road.

October 20.—One hundred Turcoman Cossacks passed E. They had rifles, but no horses, and were said to be for guard duty at railway stations.

October 21.—One hundred Kavkaz Cossacks passed E.

Three hundred (time-expired) men, including a number of the Pontoon Company, came in by steamer from up stream, and left E.

Garrison of Charjui:—

17th Turkestan Battalion, 800 strong.  
 6th Turkestan Battalion, 200, strong. This is a detachment on temporary duty here, to furnish escorts for the trains.  
 19th Turkestan Battalion, 300 strong. This detachment furnishes escorts for the steamers.  
 2nd Railway Battalion, 300 strong.  
 4th Orenburg Cossacks, 200 strong. These are part of the Cossacks who came in from Kerki on the 15th October.  
 Amu Darya flotilla, 500 strong.  
 Frontier Guard, 50 strong. These men's shoulder straps are black, not the usual green colour.  
 Machine-gun party and artillerymen; 100 together, with four machine-guns, and two old field-guns.

(Signed) H. SMYTH, Captain,  
 Military Attaché.

Meshed, November 7, 1908.

Inclosure 4 in No. 393.

No. 46.—Diary of Military Attaché, Meshed, for week ending November 14, 1908.

*Summary of News.*

(Secret.)

KRASNOVODSK reports departure of 230 time-expired men, and arrival of eighty recruits.

2. Merv gives some further details of the troops who returned from Askabad in October.

3. A whole section of thirty men with the two non-commissioned officers in charge of the section, is being tried for having fired on General Mishchenko. There does not appear to have been any large amount of premeditation in this attempt, as the men fired off the reserve ammunition which they carried as part of their marching order. They simply got a chance of shooting the General, and took it, regardless of the practical certainty of detection. This is a typical case, illustrating both the impulsive recklessness of the Russian character, and the bad state of the Russian army.

4. According to our Samarkand agent, Said Ahmad Beg and the other Jamshedis at Samarkand are giving the Russians a good deal of trouble with their intrigues, demands for money, &c.

*"Transcaspian Review."*

October 18-31.—A collision occurred at Dushak station between two goods trains. Eight waggons and two cisterns were destroyed.

November 2.—Two Feldwebels and thirty soldiers are to be tried for shooting General Mishchenko—as this is the total number of men who were found to have fired ball ammunition, which they had no right to have fired.

November 3.—The Imperial domains of Bairam Ali are now declared free of cholera.

*Turkestan News.*

October 27.—At Tashkent on the 24th October there were forty-four cases of cholera in hospital. One fresh case was admitted during the day, three were discharged, two died, forty remained in hospital.

Total since the beginning of the epidemic: 306 cases, of whom 142 have died, 124 have been discharged cured, and forty remain.

*Krasnovodsk Report.*

The following time-expired men have passed through to Russia:—

October 25.—One hundred men, Krasnovodsk Reserve Battalion, from Krasnovodsk.

October 29.—One hundred Cossacks. These were mostly artillerymen from the Kuban Cossack Battery at Kahka.

October 31.—Twenty Transcaspian infantry.  
 Ten men of the 18th Turkestan Battalion.

The following recruits came in from Russia and left E. by rail:—

October 28.—Eighty Kuban Cossacks with horses to join the Kuban Cossack battery at Kahka.

The following material has been sent E.:—

October 21.—Ten trucks of sleepers and planks.  
 October 22.—Five trucks of planks.  
 October 23.—Eight trucks of sleepers and planks.  
 October 25.—Eight trucks of sleepers.  
 October 27.—Ten trucks of planks.  
 October 29.—Fourteen trucks of planks.  
 October 31.—Four trucks of planks.

*Askabad Report.*

October 27-30.—I went a round of the camps outside Askabad during these days, and found that the only troops left in them are detachments of infantry—total strength, 400—left there to look after the various lines, sheds, &c., occupied by the troops during the summer.

October 31.—One hundred men of the 2nd Railway Battalion passed through E.

November 3.—A quantity of stores came in from W., and were removed from the station by Cossacks.



*Merv Report.*

October 29.—In my previous reports I omitted to mention that I afterwards found out that, on the night of the 20th October a train came from Askabad stayed in Merv two hours and then went on to Kushk. This train consisted of one 2nd, two 3rd, and twenty-two 4th class carriages: it was a special train carrying men of various corps of the Kushk garrison returning from Askabad. I also omitted to inform you that the total strength of the Merv field battery as it returned from Askabad, was: 140 artillerymen, 8 guns, 15 waggons, 48 horses drawing guns, 46 horses attached to ammunition waggons, 16 horses drawing other vehicles, 95 spare (*i.e.*, not harnessed to anything) horses.

October 30.—One hundred men of the 2nd Railway Battalion passed E. Eighteen men of the convoy command (military police) came in from W., and were placed on duty at the prison.

November 1.—Sixty men of the Kushk Railway Company came in from W., and left for Kushk on the 3rd instant.

November 3.—Ten trucks of sleepers came in from W., and were sent through to Kushk.

*Samarkand Report.*

October 23-31.—Five cart-loads of tents have been taken out of store, and have been sent W. by rail.

The Jamshedis here have applied to the Governor for some more cash for expenses, but he replied that he could not give them anything extra (*i.e.*, extra to their keep) without authority from Tashkent. These Jamshedis have become great friends of Sirdar Ishak Khan: they (the Jamshedis) are intriguing with some people in Herat, too.

Arrivals from Kerki say that work on the Oxus Canal, from Bosagha towards Merv, has been commenced at the Bosagha end, but that the work has been suspended for want of funds, as it was found that the cost of construction would be much greater than was anticipated. The same people say that the Russians intended to bridge the Oxus about the same place, *i.e.*, between Kerki and Kilif, and that they collected a certain amount of bridging material for this purpose, but that this project has been abandoned for the present too.

(Signed) H. SMYTH, *Captain,*  
*Military Attache.*

Meshed, November 14, 1908.

Inclosure 5 in No. 393.

No. 47.—*Diary of Military Attaché, Meshed, for week ending November 21, 1908.*

*Summary of News.*

(Secret.)

GARRISON reports from Krasnovodsk and Kushk show these garrisons to be fairly normal. The only special item of interest is that 200 men of the Krasnovodsk Reserve Battalion are reported at Chikishlyar; this confirms previous news that troops in unusual numbers are being kept at the small stations on the Persian frontier on account of the disturbed state of Azerbaijan.

2. In spite of the newly-raised Turcoman levies, two more robberies by armed bands are reported between Tejen and Sarakhs. The Russians are planting a Baluch colony half-way between Tejen and Sarakhs, under a Chief named Muhammad Khan. These are the same Baluchis who, when settled in Persia on the Hari Rud, just above Pul-i-Khatun, fought with both the Persians and the Russians for their water rights in 1902. They afterwards became reconciled with the Russians, and accepted service under them as a kind of frontier guard on the Russo-Afghan frontier. They are apparently now being used to help the Russians to break up these bands of Turcoman robbers. This plan seems quite as likely to succeed as that of paying blackmail to the robbers by employing parties of Turcomans to protect the roads.

3. Our Kushk agent reports that a special Commission has just proved the existence of a huge conspiracy between the Russian police and those bands of robbers who have for so long terrorized the Merv, Tejen, Sarakhs, and other districts, and that the Merv

Chief of Police has been sentenced to twenty-five years Siberia in consequence. The Russians send Commissions to inquire into every irregularity, from the collapse of a railway downwards. Half-a-dozen of these Commissions have come to Turkestan during the last twelve months, but it is not often that they take such decisive action as this.

*"Transcaspian Review."*

November 6.—It is proposed to construct a line of telegraph from Krasnovodsk to Cheleken.

Four cases of glanders have occurred in Askabad district; the horses were shot at once.

November 8.—This year, 1,500 desyatins were under cotton, as against 1,463 last year, in the Askabad district.

The shortage of waggons on the Tashkent Railway is causing much trouble, all the stations being blocked by goods, mostly cotton and wheat, which the railway is unable to remove.

Another highway robbery has been committed between Tejen and Sarakhs, a party of Persian and Turcoman wood-cutters having been robbed of all they possessed by a band of fifteen Turcoman robbers from the Doshakh district.

November 10.—Major Matsuke Khamsonate, of the Japanese army, has been given permission to visit Tashkent, Andijan, Samarkand, Bokhara, Merv, and Krasnovodsk. He is expected in the middle (end) of November.

A new naphtha fountain has been struck at Baku, but it caught fire an hour after it began to spout.

November 12.—A party of seventeen Cossacks tried to arrest some robbers near Gurmab, in the Askabad district. The robbers escaped, but the Cossacks got four horses and a donkey. The robbers got help from a village, and returned and fired on the Cossacks, but the Cossacks drove them off in the end.

General Mishchenko is expected in Kermene on the 19th November.

*Turkestan News.*

November 6.—At Tashkent, on the 30th October, there were 31 cases of cholera in hospital. During the day, 1 fresh case was admitted, 4 discharged, 1 died; leaving 27 in hospital.

Total since the beginning of the epidemic: 320 cases, of whom 148 have died, and 146 have been discharged cured.

*Krasnovodsk Report.*

November 1-8.—During the week the following material has been sent E.:—

20 trucks of sleepers.  
5 trucks of mixed sleepers and planks.  
5 trucks of planks.  
5 trucks of rails.  
10 trucks of rails and sleepers.

(It is not suggested that rails and sleepers were mixed in the same truck, only that agent omits to mention how many trucks contained rails and how many sleepers.—H. S.)

A party of officers has arrived from Baku and has gone E. These officers constitute a special Commission sent from St. Petersburg to inquire into various abuses reported in different parts of Turkestan.

*Garrison of Krasnovodsk—*

500 men Krasnovodsk Reserve Battalion, at Krasnovodsk.  
200 men Krasnovodsk Reserve Battalion, at Chikishlyar.  
200 men (1st) Railway Battalion.  
Usual detachments of Frontier Guard, &c.

*Sarakhs Report.*

November 2.—Seven mounted Turcoman robbers have driven off 800 sheep and cattle from a place only about 15 versts from Sarakhs. They killed two of the owners too.

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November 7.—A Russian engineer arrived from Tejen; he took two head masons (or master builders) from Sarakhs and went on with them the next day to Pul-i-Khatun.

November 9.—A sum of 900 roubles has been collected from the traders of Sarakhs as their contribution towards the upkeep of the special Turcoman sowars engaged to protect the Tejen-Sarakhs road. It was explained that a similar sum is being collected from the traders of Merv and Sarakhs (2,700 roubles altogether) for the same purpose.

A year or two ago Gul Muhammad Khan Baluch, with his followers, came into Russian territory from Persia, and was settled by the Russians at Ak Chashma to protect the frontier. Now he and his followers, 200 Baluch families, have been removed from Ak Chashma, and have been given some good fertile land (i.e., better than at Ak Chashma) on the (Hari Rud) river about half-way between Tejen and Sarakhs.

#### Kushk Report.

November 6.—There are now only some 400 Jamshedis in the Kushk district. All who could do so have slipped back quietly into Afghanistan, while a number of the Headmen have gone to Samarkand and Tashkend. Most of the Jamshedis who are left have their own cattle, sheep, horses, and other property with them; and all such Jamshedis are allowed to carry arms, and have been provided with rifles by the Russians, if they have none of their own, to defend their property against Afghan or Turcoman attacks.

Some time ago the Russians began to build some new barracks at Kushk, but this work has been suspended by orders of the Governor-General.

There are strict orders in force now prohibiting Afghans from entering Kushk Fort on any pretence.

November 10.—A special Commission of officers arrived at Merv a short time ago from St. Petersburg to inquire into the lawlessness prevailing in the Merv district. The Commission has now found that an organized system of robbery is being carried on by the police in league with bands of robbers in the district. The Commission has sentenced the Provost (? Police Pristav; writer uses the word "Provost," but I cannot say if there is such an official at Merv.—H. S.) to twenty-five years' penal servitude in Siberia. The local Railway Administration is panic-stricken at this sentence, as their peculation and maladministration are notorious.

#### Garrison of Kushk—

5th Kushk Reserve Battalion, 845 strong.  
8th Transcaspian Battalion, 680 strong.  
Fortress Artillery Battalion, 450 strong.  
Telegraph Company, 200 strong.  
Railway Company, 300 strong.  
Engineer Park, 80 strong.  
Local Hospital Corps, 30 strong.  
Frontier Guard, 120 strong.  
Kavkaz Cossacks, 200 strong.  
Intendence, 40 strong.

#### Samarkand Report.

November 7.—Inspections are being made of the reservists resident in Samarkand town and district, and fresh descriptive rolls of them are being prepared.

The Officer Commanding the Termez section of the Frontier Guard has arrived here with 100 of his men, and has bought 100 horses (for the Frontier Guard) in Samarkand.

The Jamshedis have again petitioned the Governor for more cash. They are now asking to be given land in the Samarkand district for themselves and for their followers now in the Kushk district.

The Governor's only reply to all these petitions is that he will refer them to Tashkend.

(Signed) H. SMYTH, Captain,  
Military Attaché.

Meshed, November 21, 1908.

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No. 394.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 577.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, December 12, 1908.

M. ISVOLSKY again mentioned to me recently the intention of the Persian Government to dispatch a Special Envoy to St. Petersburg, and said that he had informed the Persian Minister that he had been surprised to hear that the Envoy had left Tehran, although the Russian Government had already explained that His Majesty the Emperor was not receiving visits of condolence on the death of the late Grand Duke Alexis. He had intimated to the Persian Minister that, in such circumstances, it was somewhat unusual to insist on a Special Mission being dispatched. The Persian Minister said that he would at once telegraph to ascertain whether the Envoy could be stopped, but, as M. Isvolsky remarked, it would be difficult for that gentleman to retrace his steps now that he had set out on his journey. I said that I believed, after his visit to St. Petersburg, it was intended that the Special Envoy should proceed to Berlin to complain of the steps recently taken by Russia and Great Britain, but I thought that we could both regard that portion of his Mission with equanimity.

M. Isvolsky said that, as we were talking of Persian affairs, he would inform me that M. de Hartwig was drawing up a Memorandum on the present situation in Persia, and that he had gathered from the latter that the great need of Persia at this moment was money, and that, if some advance were made to pay the arrears due to officials and the troops, under, of course, very strict control, a serious difficulty would be removed. M. de Hartwig was further of opinion that there were a few capable men in Persia who could with advantage be called to the Councils of the Shah, and he mentioned the name of Nasr-ul-Mulk as an exceedingly enlightened man. I said that I was acquainted with that gentleman, who had been educated at Oxford, and whose life had been saved from the Shah's executioner when the Assembly was dissolved. He would, of course, require guarantees for his safety if he were to return to Persia. M. Isvolsky added that the Grand Vizier, according to M. de Hartwig, was a person whose dismissal from office was most desirable. I said that this was also the opinion of Sir G. Barclay, who considered that Amir Behadur Jang could also be retired with much advantage to his country.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[44383]

No. 395.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 586.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, December 15, 1908.

I INFORMED M. Isvolsky this morning that His Majesty's Government had been quite in ignorance that there was any intention of the Zil-es-Sultan returning to Persia, and that they would be quite prepared, if he agreed, to let His Highness know that he was returning at his own risk and peril, and that he could not rely on British protection of his life and property. M. Isvolsky observed, with a smile, that this was not a pleasant prospect for the Zil-es-Sultan; and that he had seen in some newspaper that His Highness had already left Nice for Tehran. Could I tell him why the Zil was going back to Persia? I said that for the present I was unable to do so, but I was awaiting some further news from Tehran which might explain matters.

I may mention that I have not received the two telegrams of Sir G. Barclay, which evidently refer to the recall of the Zil-es-Sultan. I told M. Isvolsky that I would speak again to him on the subject when I was better posted as to the reason of the Zil's return. All that I wished to do at present was to explain that the matter had come as a surprise to His Majesty's Government, and that they were prepared to give a serious warning to the Zil-es-Sultan.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON

P.S.—Since writing the above I have received the two telegrams from Sir G. Barclay, and as the latter states that there is no need for action, I propose to inquire of M. Isvolsky whether he would wish us or not to give the warning I have mentioned. I am of opinion that he would be content to leave matters as they are.

A. N.



[44387]

No. 396.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 590.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, December 15, 1908.*

I TOLD M. Isvolsky this morning that I wished to speak to him as to the situation at Tehran. I pointed out to him that the Shah, in spite of his assurances, was evading his promises, and had set up a Council composed of his own nominees, from whom no possible benefit could be expected. In short, the Shah was disregarding all the advice which had been given to him; had taken no steps to promulgate an electoral law; was distinctly disinclined to convoke an Assembly; and had ignored all question of an amnesty to the Tabreez people. My Government were of opinion that some tangible proof should be given to the Shah that he could not be permitted to trifle with the representations which had been made to him. He had, I said, declined to receive the two Dragomans, and that the British and Russian Representatives were consequently putting into a Memorandum the remonstrances which the Dragomans would have personally made to His Majesty. The two Legations had been working admirably together, but their protestations and remonstrances appeared to have little practical effect.

M. Isvolsky said that he had not heard that the two Dragomans had applied for a second audience, and he observed that, while not in any way contesting what I had laid before him, he did not quite see what further steps could well be taken. He considered that it might be as well to follow the course which we had advocated formerly, i.e., to leave the two parties to fight it out between themselves, and he hesitated very much to take any action which could be construed into direct intervention in the affairs of Persia.

I said that I quite understood that attitude, but I would point out to him that there was no necessity for the present to go further than we had already done. It seemed to me that it was really essential that both Legations should persistently continue to urge the Shah to act up to his engagements, and to impress on him that he could not expect his country to be pacified till he had fulfilled the conditions which I had previously mentioned. I was sure that his Excellency would appreciate this; but as protestations were having little or no effect, I thought that the Shah should be given clearly to understand that neither Russia nor Great Britain would allow indefinitely their advice to be ignored.

M. Isvolsky asked in what manner did I propose to bring this home to the Shah? Had my Government any step to suggest? I said that my Government had at one time had the idea of Russia and Great Britain seizing the Customs in the north and south of Persia. This measure might possibly be brought forward again.

M. Isvolsky said he would think over what I had mentioned, and would talk over the matter with M. de Hartwig, who was preparing a Memorandum on the situation in Persia, and as to what means might be taken to remedy it. His view was that one of the principal needs of Persia was money. I told M. Isvolsky that I was sure we should not advance a sixpence in present circumstances. The Shah must completely change his present attitude before we could even entertain the proposal to make any money advances. I asked what he proposed to do as regards the Special Envoy of the Shah, who had just arrived in St. Petersburg?

M. Isvolsky said that he had not ascertained in what capacity the gentleman had come here. He did not know whether he had any credentials properly accrediting him; but he believed that he had a letter from the Shah to the Emperor. The Persian Minister himself had not yet been received in audience to present his credentials, and until this had been accomplished he would not deal with the Special Envoy. If the latter had a letter for the Emperor, some means could be found for transmitting it to its destination. I said that I hoped in any case that the reception to be accorded to the Envoy would be a cordial one.

His Excellency said I could rest assured that it would not be a cordial one. He would like, he added, to ask M. de Hartwig to call upon me to talk over Persian affairs.

I said that I would be very happy to see him.

I will recur to the question of the Special Envoy, and I think I can now, without offence, suggest that unless he is properly accredited, he should not be received in audience; but I did not think it prudent to raise this point at my interview of this morning.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[44391]

No. 397.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 594.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, December 17, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of an *aide-mémoire* which I handed to M. Isvolsky yesterday in regard to the negotiations which Sir G. Barclay was undertaking with a view of the Imperial Bank of Persia obtaining a lien on the customs revenues at Bushire.

I told his Excellency that I understood that M. Sabline was supporting Sir G. Barclay's representations, but that perhaps a telegram from here authorizing him to do so would strengthen his hands. M. Isvolsky said that he would look into the matter.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

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Inclosure in No. 397.

*Aide-Mémoire communicated by Sir A. Nicolson to M. Isvolsky.*

THE payment of the interest on the loans due to the Imperial Bank of Persia is in default. This is partly due to the transfer to the Russian Government from the Bank of Persia of the lien on the receipts of the customs at Kermanshah. The British Minister has been endeavouring to obtain an arrangement at Bushire similar to that which was lately in force for the Bank of Persia at Kermanshah. By this arrangement the bank retained each month sufficient funds to meet the interest accruing on the loans. In order to avoid a situation arising such as is contemplated in Article 5 of the Convention of 1907 relating to Persia, His Majesty's Embassy would be glad if instructions were sent to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran to support the British Minister in obtaining a satisfactory solution of the question.

*St. Petersburg, December 3 (16), 1908.*

[44392]

No. 398.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 595.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, December 17, 1908.*

I SPOKE again to M. Isvolsky yesterday in regard to the Persian special Envoy, and said that as he appeared to be without any proper credentials, and as the Russian Government had deprecated his visit, it would be a good lesson to the Shah if the Emperor were to decline to receive him. M. Isvolsky said that he had not yet seen the Envoy, and that when the Persian Minister had presented his credentials he intended to ascertain more precisely the official character and object of the special mission. He did not wish to be unduly discourteous, nor did he desire to be too amiable towards the Envoy; and he must consider what would be the best course to pursue. M. de Hartwig had seen the Envoy, who was an old Tehran acquaintance, and had said that he was a man of no great importance. The Envoy had mentioned to M. de Hartwig that he hoped that the British and Russian Governments would not press the Shah too much, as His Majesty was really animated by the most sincere desire to establish a liberal Constitution. The Persian Minister, on the other hand, had asked M. Isvolsky to continue to employ as much pressure as possible on the Shah. M. Isvolsky remarked that it was characteristic two Persian Envoys speaking in totally different tones.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.



[44447]

No. 399.

*Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 865.)

Sir,

*Constantinople, December 15, 1908.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 831 of the 4th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad, reporting further on the protest of the Ulemas of Nedjef against the entry of Russian troops into Persia.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 399.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Ramsay to Government of India.*

Sir,

*Bagdad, November 12, 1908.*

IN continuation of my letter dated the 2nd November, 1908, I have the honour to inform you that on the 8th November Mirza Mehdi, son of Mulla Muhammad Kadhim Khorassani, came to me with an imposing deputation of the Ulemas of Nedjef, and presented me with the document of which I inclose a translation. It is a protest against the real or intended passage of the Persian frontier by Russian troops. Mirza Mehdi and his companions were very anxious that I should telegraph their protest direct to London, but this I declined to do. I pointed out that it was difficult to see what right permanent residents of Turkey had to protest on behalf of the Persian nation, and that in any case, if Russia did anything, or was going to do anything, to which they objected, it would be more reasonable for them to lodge their protest with the Russian Consul-General.

These gentlemen have a very inflated idea of their own importance, and therefore, while saying that I would meet their wishes to the extent of telegraphing their protest to Constantinople, I was careful to let them understand that in my opinion the British Government was not likely to recognize their right to speak for Persia.

(Signed) J. RAMSAY, *Lieutenant-Colonel, Political Resident in Turkish Arabia, and His Britannic Majesty's Consul-General, Bagdad.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 399.

*Translation of a Document from the Religious Heads of the Persian Nation Nedjef, to Lieutenant-Colonel Ramsay, dated 7th Shawwal, 1326.*

WE beg to bring the following to the notice of the British Government.

We have been informed by telegram that the Russian Government have instructions to cross (or transgress) the frontiers of Azerbaijan, and that preparations are being made to dispatch troops to Tabreez.

If (also "as") this matter is true, and if (also "as") the dispatch of troops is under the pretence of protecting their subjects, the Consuls of the Great Powers at Tabreez are ready to give evidence (*tit.* "and are witnesses") that the Persian nation of Tabreez have earnestly persevered and are persevering to protect them in a complete civilized manner, and we the Religious (or Spiritual) Heads of the Persian nation have issued orders that they should protect all the foreign subjects residing in Persia, and up to this time the Persians of Tabreez caused no loss of rights at all to the Russian subjects to give them the right of any interference.

But if it is for compliance with the wishes of His Majesty Muhammad Ali, the Shah, all the Great Powers know that Persia is officially (a) constitutional (country). the Shah has (or "the Russians have") no right to act against the Constitution which was signed by the late Muzaffer-ud-Din Shah and also Muhammad Ali Shah himself, and which he swore to maintain, and the only intention of the Persians at Tabreez is to get the right of establishing (or appointing) the National Council (or Parliament) and to preserve the basis of the Constitution. They are not rebellious and insubordinate. They only demand their legal rights.

Such being the case, what right have the Russian Government that they have prevented them (*i.e.*, the Persians) from demanding their rights and are interfering with the internal affairs of Persia?

If this is true, we, the Religious (Spiritual) Heads of the Persian nation, beg to bring our objection concerning this effort of the Russians to the notice of the British Government, who are the originators of justice among all nations, and submit this protest in writing, and request that the powerful British Government may generously bestow care to remove this illegal (or unjust) aggression and all interferences of the Russian Government in Persia.

The Religious Heads of the Persian Nation.  
(Seals of Abdulla-al-Mazandarani, Muhammad Kazim-al-Khorassani, and Muhammed Hussein Teherani, son of Al Haji Mirza Khalil.)

In the Name of God!

I request all the Great (Strong) Powers (the Kings) of the world to bestow sovereign (or supreme, royal) care regarding the idea of aggressions by the Russian Government in Azerbaijan, if it is true. It is certainly contrary to the fixed and decided rules. They should turn them (the Russians) back.

Written by the Raji, son of Saddrud-din-Amili (?)  
(Abuduhu Ismael-al-Musawi.)

[44604]

No. 400.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 309.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 21, 1908.*

PERSIA.

This afternoon I received a visit from M. de Hartwig.

He thinks that the Shah's hesitation to act on the advice of the two Legations would cease if a hope were held out to him that, in the event of his taking immediate steps to promulgate an Electoral Law on reasonable lines and to convoke an Assembly, certain financial assistance might possibly be afforded to him by the two Governments.

The sum, the expenditure of which should be strictly controlled, should not, in M. de Hartwig's opinion, exceed an advance of 400,000*l.* M. de Hartwig thinks that, if such an advance were made, pressure for the removal of the worst of the Shah's entourage could then be applied effectively. He feels convinced that continuance of the present situation will either lead to anarchy, by which intervention might be rendered inevitable, or that the Shah will turn in his urgent need to Germany and, in order to obtain funds, surrender anything.

M. Isvolsky, I believe, shares these views of M. de Hartwig.

[44603]

No. 401.

*Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 422.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Constantinople, December 21, 1908.*

I AM informed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that, according to the telegrams he has received from Tehran, the refugees at the Turkish Embassy are not forty only in number, as stated in Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 445 of the 21st instant, but comprise large crowds of Nationalists. After consultation with the Grand Vizier he had not found it possible to refuse to grant them asylum, in view of the fact that they were in danger of their lives.



[44412]

No. 402.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 444.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 21, 1908.*

SITUATION in Azerbaijan.

Mr. Wratislaw reports that there is renewed talk in Tabreez of autonomy.

Ain-ed-Dowleh is making an attempt to cut off the supply of provisions to Tabreez, and it is probable that the Nationalists in force will attack his camp.

It is also probable that there will be a fight between the Nationalists at Ghogan and the Royalists at Maraza.

[44492]

No. 403.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 445.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 21, 1908.*

SITUATION at Tehran.

Forty Nationalists, who include a leading Mujtehid, have sought the protection of the Turkish Embassy, and are now in refuge there.

I suspect that this "bast" has been engineered by the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires, with the cognizance of the doyen, the Austrian Minister. I propose to impress upon the former that political "bast" should be discouraged, and I should be glad if some hint could be given him from Constantinople on this point.

It would be undesirable that the Turkish Embassy should have the credit of bringing the Shah to reason at a time when our joint representations seem at last to be producing some effect.

[44344]

No. 404.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.*

(No. 303.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 21, 1908.*

RETURN of Zil-es-Sultan to Persia.

See your telegram No. 111 of the 19th instant.

The Russian Government have acquiesced in the joint communication to the Zil. When it is made I shall have done all I desire, which is to divest us of any obligation to protect the Zil on his return to Persia and from any responsibility for his safety.

[44343]

No. 405.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 363.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 21, 1908.*

SIRRI oxide.

We have received most satisfactory information from Ellinger. He says that he has just signed a contract for the sale of the Hormuz oxide with Andrew Weir. The contracts hold good for three years.

This being so you might, if you see no objection, ask the Moin to show you the Firman for Sirri and the other islands (see my telegram No. 357 of the 18th instant).

[44735]

No. 406.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 22.)*

(No. 310.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 22, 1908.*

PERSIAN Special Envoy.

I am informed by M. Isvolsky that the Emperor will not receive the Special Envoy. M. Isvolsky himself will see him, and says that he will use plain language to him on the subject of the state of affairs prevailing in Persia at the present moment.

[44815]

No. 407.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 23.)*

Sir,

*India Office, December 22, 1908.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to forward herewith, for the information of Sir Edward Grey, a copy of a Report by the Director-in-chief, Indo-European Telegraph Department, on the subject of a request by the Persian Minister of Telegraphs at Tehran that the Indo-European Telegraph Department should erect a second wire from Tehran to Shahrud, on the Tehran-Meshed line.

I am to inquire whether Sir Edward Grey is of opinion that the Director-in-chief should be instructed to carry out the work as proposed.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) T. R. BUCHANAN.

Inclosure in No. 407.

*Report by Director-in-Chief, Indo-European Telegraph Department, dated December 4, 1908.*

A TELEGRAM has reached me from the Director of Telegraphs at Tehran to say that the Persian Minister of Telegraphs was now calling for the erection of the second wire from Tehran to Shahrud, a station on the Tehran-Meshed line some 260 miles from Tehran.

In July 1907 the Persian Minister reported to the Director of Telegraphs that his Government had sanctioned this work being carried out, saying that the material required would be obtained from Russia, though, but for the greater distance, it would have been far preferable to obtain the stores from India. He added that his Government would be prepared to pay all expenses of construction, which he hoped would not amount to a very high figure. In April last the Director telegraphed that the necessary material had arrived, and the Persian Telegraph Administration was pressing him to complete the work. On this I telegraphed to the Director asking him if the Persian Telegraph Administration would advance the funds necessary to pay all charges for carrying out the work. On the 16th November the Director telegraphed that the Persian Minister of Telegraphs can provide funds, and was asking that the erection of the wire should be commenced. In reply to an inquiry from me, the Director telegraphed that it was proposed to carry out the distribution of the material during the winter months, and to erect the wire in March next, and that the Persian Minister of Telegraphs had agreed to this arrangement.

I have been told that the Persian Government have no particular desire for this second wire, but that the Russians are anxious to obtain it for their own purposes. It appears to me that if the Persian Telegraph Administration can supply the necessary funds, which they report they can do, it only remains for the Indo-European Telegraph Department to put up the wire in the way that has been proposed. A refusal to have anything to do with the work would probably make the Persian Minister ask for Russian assistance to complete it.

[44857]

No. 408.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 23.)*

Sir,

*India Office, December 22, 1908.*

IN reply to your letter of the 10th instant, I am directed to inclose copy of a Memorandum by the Director-in-chief of the Indo-European Telegraph Department on the questions raised in Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 423 and Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 290 as to the steps to be taken to secure the control of the Arabistan telegraph line in connection with the question of the extension of the Concessions of the Indo-European Telegraph Department.

Mr. Kirk's proposals may be summarized as follows:—

On the receipt from the Persian Minister of Telegraphs of the proposal referred to in Sir G. Barclay's telegram, the Indo-European Telegraph Department would be prepared to accept it, and, provided the Persian Telegraph Department undertake to procure an extension of the Concessions till 1945, would offer in the first instance to

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reconstruct the Arabistan line on behalf of the Persian Telegraph Department, at a cost of some 6,000*l.*, and to spend some 600*l.* per annum in maintaining it subsequently. In addition to this, should it prove necessary in order to secure the extension of the Concessions, the Indo-European Telegraph Department would be further prepared to offer to advance to the Persian Telegraph Department a lump sum not exceeding 10,000*l.*, being ten years' rental of the Central Persia line. The stipulations as to which Sir G. Barclay asks are specified in paragraph 6 of the Memorandum.

Viscount Morley would be glad to receive Sir E. Grey's views on these proposals. The arrangement, regarded as a matter of administration between the Indo-European Telegraph Department and the Department of Persian Telegraphs, would, as Mr. Kirk points out, be to the advantage of both Departments. In normal circumstances Lord Morley would be prepared to approve it without reserve. But the proposals, in so far as they may involve an advance of 10,000*l.* in cash by the Indo-European Telegraph Department to the Persian Telegraph Department may be considered inconsistent with the policy of His Majesty's Government not to grant any financial assistance at present to the Persian Government. It would be a matter for regret if the opportunity that now presents itself for securing the extension of the Concession cannot be taken—the more so that there appears to be no prospect within calculable time of such a change in the situation in Persia as would render it possible to take up the question without reference to political considerations.

A point that has to be considered before a decision is arrived at is whether the Russian Government, whose consent would be necessary, would be willing to agree to the arrangement proposed by Mr. Kirk, which has for them the advantage of excluding the influence of any third Power from the sphere of the telegraph system in Arabistan, as well as of securing to them the control of the Tehran-Khanikin line till 1945.

It appears from Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 374, dated the 14th November, 1908, that the Russian Government are already aware of the action contemplated in respect of the Arabistan line.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 408.

*Memorandum by Mr. Kirk respecting Sir G. Barclay's Telegram No. 423, December 8, and Sir A. Nicolson's Telegram No. 290, December 9, 1908.*

FROM the information I have received from my Department the position appears to be that the Persian Government are pressing their Minister of Telegraphs to provide efficient telegraph lines in Arabistan, that he represented that this cannot be done unless iron standards are erected on the lines, and that he asked his Government to supply funds to purchase the iron standards required. To this demand the Persian Government replied that it could not afford at present to give the money the Minister of Telegraphs asked for, and that in the meantime the wooden post lines were to be repaired by him. In an interview with the Director of Telegraphs, the Minister stated he thought he could provide 10,000 *krans* (about 190*l.*) for this purpose. To get rid of his responsibilities in the matter the Minister is anxious to have the control of the lines transferred to the Indo-European Telegraph Department. Sir G. Barclay's telegram states that this offer to transfer the control will probably be made shortly, and that the Shah desires the gradual replacement of the wooden posts by iron. The telegram further states that Mr. Barker, the Director of Telegraphs, suggests that this offer might be used for obtaining the prolongation of the British Telegraph Concessions in Persia up to 1945, by our demanding this in return for our services in reconstructing and maintaining the Arabistan telegraph lines.

2. In a Memorandum, dated the 25th April, 1907, to the Political Department I pointed out that in 1891 we had paid 5,000*l.* to the Shah, and had made a present of the value of 500*l.* to the Prime Minister for the renewal up to 1925 of our two Concessions of 1868 and 1872. I suggested that similar amounts might be offered for the renewal of these Concessions up to 1945, and that for the renewal of the Central Persia line Concession the annual payment of the minimum rental of 1,000*l.* might be anticipated by the payment in advance of the next ten years' rental, that is, by the payment of 10,000*l.* in one sum. I understand these suggestions were approved at the time. For the renewal of its Concession to 1945 the Indo-European Telegraph Company advanced 40,000*l.* to the late Shah as a loan to bear interest.

3. It may be that for political reasons the direct payment of a large sum of money to the Shah may now not be approved of, and that such a payment could not be made while the present conditions of government last in Persia. These unsatisfactory conditions may continue for years, and therefore no progress would be made towards obtaining the renewal of the Concessions, and if eventually the Shah had to rule with a constitutional Assembly it is probable the Assembly would not allow the Concessions to be renewed. But the taking over of the control of the Arabistan lines would allow of the offer of an indirect form of payment for the prolongation of our telegraph Concessions. The arrangement, as it stands at present, is that in taking over these lines we are prepared to spend 300*l.* in a survey of the lines with any temporary repairs that can be effected, 1,000*l.* in permanent repairs later, and 600*l.* a-year in maintaining the lines. In this arrangement there was no intention of providing iron standards for erection on the lines. It appears, however, that the Shah is desirous that the lines should be made permanent with iron posts. If, therefore, the question of the prolongation of the Concessions can be linked with the question of taking over the control of the Arabistan lines, the offer might be made that, in addition to the expenditure shown above, we would be prepared to supply on these lines, free of charge to the Persian Government, iron posts and their fittings to a cost of 5,000*l.*, provided all our Telegraph Concessions, along with our control of the Arabistan lines, were prolonged to 1945. It will be seen that the expenditure of 5,000*l.* proposed is the amount it was intended to offer to the Shah, but it would be of more advantage to us that this amount should be expended on the Arabistan lines than that it should be presented to the Shah.

4. Should there be no objection to the direct payment to the Shah of amounts, as shown in the second paragraph of this note, then the question of the prolongation of the Concessions could be kept apart from that of the transfer of control of the Arabistan lines, more especially, as pointed out by Sir A. Nicolson in his telegram, if the combination of the two questions should cause confusion in the minds of the Russian Government. If a direct payment be not approved, then the transfer of control of the Arabistan lines gives an opportunity of offering an indirect payment for the prolongation of the Concessions. The telegraph rights over the Tehran-Khanikin line would be extended to 1945 if our Telegraph Concessions were renewed to that date, so that it would appear to be to the advantage of Russia to accept our combining the questions of the Arabistan lines and the prolongation of the Concessions if progress cannot be made with regard to the latter question in any other way.

5. It is very important, both for British and Russian interests, that our Telegraph Concessions should be renewed, and I think it will be found that to bring this about it will be necessary to allow money to pass. This might be arranged as a telegraph matter by informing the Persian Minister of Telegraphs that, if he can bring about the prolongation of the Concessions and the transfer of control of the Arabistan lines on the terms shown in the third paragraph of this note, the Indo-European Telegraph Department would be prepared to advance him for the purposes of his Administration, subject to the sanction of the Persian Government, the minimum rental due by the Department on account of the Central Persia line for the next ten years. The advance would be a Departmental matter between the two Telegraph Administrations, and how this money was eventually employed would not be our concern.

6. Sir G. Barclay asks what special stipulations are desired in regard to the Arabistan lines. These stipulations might be as follows:—

- (a.) The transfer of control up to 1945.
- (b.) Permission to employ telegraphists of the Indo-European Telegraph Department at telegraph offices in Mohammerah, Ahwaz, and at the station on the Tehran-Bushire line, to which the Arabistan line may be connected.
- (c.) Permission to connect the Arabistan line to the Tehran-Bushire line for purposes of through working.
- (d.) Permission for the Indo-European Telegraph Department to erect a second wire for its own use should this be desired during the period of its control.
- (e.) Guarantee from the Persian Government that, with the exception of employés of the Indo-European Telegraph Department required for the purposes of control, it will allow the employment in the telegraph offices and on the lines of Persian subjects only.

(Signed) H. A. KIRK.

December 14, 1908.



[44885]

No. 409.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 23.)*

Sir,

*India Office, December 23, 1908.*

IN reply to your letter of the 21st instant, I am directed to say that Viscount Morley concurs in the terms of the draft telegram which Sir E. Grey proposes to address to His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg as to the conditions under which His Majesty's Government would be prepared to consider, jointly with the Russian Government, the question of guaranteeing the interest of a loan to the Persian Government, covered by adequate security.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[44940]

No. 410.

*Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 23.)*

(No. 113.)

[By Post.]

*Paris, December 22, 1908.*(Telegraphic.) *En clair.*

PERSIA.

Your telegrams Nos. 300 and 302 of the 18th instant and the 20th instant. The Russian Ambassador is telegraphing to St. Petersburg the following account, in which I concur, of our interview of this afternoon with the Zil-es-Sultan:—

"L'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre et moi avons fait à Zilli Sultan la communication prescrite. Il a répondu qu'il était parti du consentement du Schah pour quelques mois, mais ayant reçu par son frère et par le Grand Vizir l'ordre de Sa Majesté de rentrer immédiatement en Perse s'est cru obligé d'obéir, et a aussitôt quitté Nice, quoique y ayant loué une villa pour trois mois. Si, après cela, il ne retournait pas, quelle serait sa position vis-à-vis du Schah et du pays? On donnerait à sa conduite des interprétations défavorables, tandis qu'en rentrant en Perse, où il ne voulait rechercher ni honneurs ni pouvoir, il n'avait en vue que d'obéir à son Souverain et de soigner ses intérêts, qui sont en souffrance, malgré la protection promise par l'Angleterre et la Russie. Ne voulant guère se priver de cette protection, Zilli Sultan demandait conseil aux deux Gouvernements et se déclarait prêt à le suivre. Si son arrivée ne peut avoir lieu que pour un séjour limité ou après un certain laps de temps, il s'y conformerait strictement. Mais il lui serait pénible de devoir résider indéfiniment à l'étranger dans sa position incertaine actuelle. Nous avons demandé à Zilli Sultan s'il était sûr que les ordres venaient du Schah, et s'ils contenaient une garantie quelconque pour sa personne. Il a répondu n'avoir reçu que des télégrammes de son frère et du Sadrazam sans aucune explication. Nous avons déclaré à Zilli Sultan que nous allions référer à nos Gouvernements et demander des instructions. Il comptait partir Samedi."

[44941]

No. 411.

*Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 23.)*

(No. 114.)

*Paris, December 22, 1908.*

(Telegraphic.)

PERSIA.

In the course of the interview with the Zil-es-Sultan reported in my telegram No. 113 of to-day, he said that for forty years he had been regarded as an adversary by the Shahs, his father, his brother, and his nephew, successively, but nothing had ever been proved against him. As he was Governor in the South he naturally favoured the English, who were neighbours, in the same way that he would have favoured the Russians if he had been Governor in the North. It was necessary for the weak to be on friendly terms with the strong. As to whether the Shah would give him guarantees for his life and family and property, he said that in an autocratic country such as Persia what was given one day might be taken away the next. His garden had been given over to his sister on the demand, so he was told, of the Russian Legation. Appeal had been made on his behalf to the British Legation against this seizure by his sister, but nothing was done and no answer was made.

[44741]

No. 412.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 23.)*

(No. 446.)

*Tehran, December 22, 1908.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

THE Shah and Constitution.

Further representations were made by the two Legations yesterday in order to forestall further efforts on the part of the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires to interfere in Persian affairs, and also because it was known that the Shah was wavering.

The Grand Vizier received the two dragomans, who urged that the Shah should order the Council, to which a few good men should be added, to complete the Electoral Law which His Majesty, before the demonstration of the 7th November, reported in my telegram No. 366 of the 8th November, had been about to publish. The dragomans inferred from the Grand Vizier's attitude that the Shah was on the point of yielding, and he undertook to convey our representations to His Majesty.

The Shah sent to the Russian Legation last night to inquire whether, if he followed our advice, the two Legations would give him guarantees. The nature of the guarantees which His Majesty desires is not quite clear, but we have instructed our dragomans to assure His Majesty that we will protect his person in case of necessity, and if he should seek our protection, and that he will have our support and sympathy so long as he governs as a Constitutional Sovereign. Should His Majesty ask for this guarantee in writing the dragomans have instructions to say that the two Representatives cannot give it without orders from their Governments.

It is expected that the Shah will receive the dragomans in audience this afternoon. We hope, should the Shah follow our advice, to receive from His Majesty an undertaking which will enable us to obtain the withdrawal of those in refuge at the Turkish Embassy, so that Anglo-Russian co-operation, and not the Turkish Embassy, may get the credit of persuading the Shah to carry out his undertakings.

[44888]

No. 413.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 23.)*

(No. 447.)

*Tehran, December 23, 1908.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

SHAH told the two dragomans, for whom His Majesty sent yesterday, that he desired it to be understood by the two Representatives that he was resolved to fulfil his promises, and that he was on the point of doing so when the people, by taking bast at the Turkish Embassy, sought to force his hand. His Majesty was anxious not to have the appearance of giving way on this account.

Mr. Churchill, in response to a request for guarantees, read to His Majesty the assurances mentioned in my telegram No. 446 of yesterday. After taking these down in Persian, Shah suggested the additional inclusion of an admission that the last National Assembly was a failure, and of guarantees for his family and throne so long as he governed as a Constitutional Sovereign. To this the two dragomans replied that they had no authorization to give the assurances otherwise than as they stood. In reply to a request for them in writing, His Majesty was informed that instructions would be requisite for the purpose.

It seemed as if the Shah was quite prepared to follow our advice (please see my telegram No. 446 above referred to), and to furnish us with an undertaking in writing by which we should be enabled to obtain the withdrawal from the Turkish Embassy of the persons in bast there.

After the audience was ended the Shah saw the Grand Vizier and the Minister of War. Afterwards the former made great difficulties in connection with this undertaking, but eventually promised that a statement, drafted by the two dragomans and signed by himself, should to-day be communicated to the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the effect that "His Imperial Majesty undertakes to issue on the day following the withdrawal of the refugees in the Turkish Embassy a Rescript providing for the elaboration, by a Committee selected by His Majesty and comprised in the Council of State, of an Electoral Law." The Minister for Foreign Affairs is to retain this statement after it has been shown to-day to a delegate from the two Legations.

[1622]

3 R



I presume there can be no question of granting the Shah a guarantee for his throne, though I gather that it would be welcome to the Russian Legation. I should, however, be glad to receive instructions in regard to according the written assurance desired by His Majesty.

[44889]

No. 414.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 23.)*

(No. 448.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, December 23, 1908.

OXIDE. Please refer to your telegram No. 363 of the 21st instant.

Moin-ut-Tujar, who says that he cannot just now show me the other Firmans in his possession, states that the Firman of 1904 is the only one in which any places are mentioned by name (the date of the Firman mentioned in the last paragraph of my telegram No. 442 of the 20th instant should be 1904, and not 1894).

I have been careful not to mention to Moin any of the three islands mentioned in your telegram, for fear of his opposing Strick's plans, though it is less important to avoid antagonizing him since the signature of the contract regarding Hormuz.

Moin is probably opposing the negotiations of the representative of the Manchester firm as regards the Sirri Concession. Anyhow, they are not progressing.

The amount of the annual payment stated in the last paragraph of my telegram No. 439 is correct.

[44885]

No. 415.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 672.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, December 23, 1908.

FINANCIAL question and Constitution in Persia. See telegram from Tehran No. 440 of the 17th instant.

His Majesty's Government are prepared, if the Shah again raises the question, to inquire into it and to consider whether it would be possible for them to associate themselves in a joint guarantee of the interest accruing from a sufficiently well secured loan; they would, however, only do this after assurances had been received by the two Legations from M. Bizot that, having thoroughly investigated the matter, he considers that it is necessary and desirable that a loan should be granted. His Majesty's Government can on no account go further than this, and until the Shah has issued an Electoral Law and fixed an early date for the elections they can express no opinion. In any case they could not entertain the question until satisfactory guarantees were provided for the use to which the money would be put and a Constitution working.

M. Isvolsky should be acquainted with these views, and in informing him you should refer to despatch No. 251 of the 10th September, 1908, from Mr. Marling and add that, if such a measure appears to M. Bizot feasible, it will in our opinion be better to abandon the project of a loan, even when the Constitution is in working order.

[44929]

No. 416.

*The Persia Committee to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 24.)*

Sir,

6, Thames Chambers, Adelphi, London [undated].

I HAVE the honour to send you, by direction of the Executive of the Persia Committee, which was formed at a meeting held at the House of Commons on the 17th December, a Memorial signed by the officers of the Executive.

I am, &amp;c.

(Signed) R. H. GREYTON,  
Honorary Secretary.

Inclosure in No. 416.

*Memorial addressed by the Persia Committee to Sir Edward Grey.*

Sir,

ON behalf of the Persia Committee, we respectfully desire to invite your attention to certain features of the situation in Persia which seem to us to afford ground for anxiety. Our sympathies have been evoked by the efforts of the Persian people to effect the regeneration of their country, and we have duly noted the attitude adopted by His Majesty's Government in relation to these efforts. You have yourself described this attitude as one of non-intervention in Persian affairs, and you have stated that the maintenance of the integrity and independence of Persia forms one of the principal objects of the Anglo-Russian Convention. The most detailed exposition of the aims and objects of Great Britain and Russia under the Convention in their relations to Persia is afforded by the communication sent by our representative at Tehran to the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs in the autumn of 1907, of which we inclose a copy.\* The assurances contained therein as to the self-denying nature of the policy of both Powers, and of their desire that Persia should be left free to manage her own affairs in her own way without the fear of foreign intervention, have caused us the greatest satisfaction.

The fact, however, that Great Britain and Russia have signed a Convention defining their attitude towards Persia would seem to render both of these Powers responsible for action taken in Persia by one of them. If, for instance, Russia were to intervene in Northern Persia, and if—as would probably happen—grave events were to follow as a result of such intervention, Great Britain would have to bear her share of the responsibility. This is a disquieting feature of the present situation which we would venture to bring to your notice.

Another source of anxiety arises out of the actions of Russian agents and Russian officers in Persia since the Convention was signed. We do not desire at present to discuss the nature of these actions, since they have been disowned by those responsible for the foreign relations of Russia. We confidently hope that the Russian Government will take prompt measures to render their occurrence impossible in the future. As regards the Russian officers, who were lent to the Shah for instructional purposes, it seems obvious that they should be confined to a strictly neutral attitude in any conflicts between the forces of the Royalists and Constitutionalists.

As regards the future of the Persian State, we have noted with satisfaction that His Majesty's Government, in concert with the Government of Russia, have impressed upon the Shah the necessity of adhering to his promises to the Persian people and of restoring the Constitution. We trust that there may be no weakening of this attitude, and that neither Power may grant any financial or moral assistance to Persia until the Shah's promises have been redeemed. We regard it as essential that the Medjliss should be freely elected, and that it should possess effective control over the national finances. It has not escaped your notice that the restoration of these privileges will need to be accompanied by an amnesty for political finances, since many of the most capable and independent members of the Constitutionalist party are at present either in exile or in revolt.

In conclusion, we may perhaps be permitted to express our belief that hopes for a regenerated Persia must at present be bound up with the success of the Constitutionalist movement. Should it succeed among a people so richly gifted as the Persians, it could scarcely fail to produce great benefits for civilization in the largest sense. Moreover, as between Great Britain and Russia, it would be difficult to overrate the advantage of such a consummation, inasmuch as one of the chief sources of friction between these two Powers would be removed by the formation of a strong and independent Persia upon the great tableland which is situated between India on the one side and the Asiatic possessions of Russia on the other.

We are, &amp;c.

(Signed) LAMINGTON,  
President.

(Signed) H. F. B. LYNCH,  
Chairman of Executive Committee.

(Signed) EDWARD G. BROWNE,  
Vice-Chairman.

(Signed) R. H. GREYTON,  
Honorary Secretary.



[44981]

No. 417.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 24.)*

(No. 449.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 24, 1908.*

PERSIAN Special Mission to St. Petersburg.

In the event of Ala-ul-Mulk proceeding to Berlin after his stay in St. Petersburg, it is important not to overlook the possibility of his seeking German financial assistance for the Persian Government.

[44982]

No. 418.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 24.)*

(No. 450.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 24, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution.

The promise of the Grand Vizier, which I reported in my telegram No. 447 of yesterday's date, has not been fulfilled, and we are to-day making further representations.

At the Turkish Embassy there are now some 250 people in refuge. The Austrian Minister has lodged in a house adjoining his Legation some others who have sought his protection.

As far as I know, the other Legations are refusing applications of persons who desire to take refuge.

[44604]

No. 419.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 673.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 24, 1908.*

ANGLO-RUSSIAN advance to Persia.

Please see Mr. Marling's despatch No. 251 of the 10th instant.

I should prefer to wait until a Constitution has been established before making an advance to the Shah. (See your telegram No. 309 of the 21st instant.) Moreover, I do not think it advisable to commit ourselves before learning the views of the Financial Adviser. In the meantime I am in consultation with the India Office as to the possible advance of our share of the suggested loan of 400,000l.

[44940]

No. 420.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 674.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 24, 1908.*

ZIL-ES-SULTAN.

Russian Ambassador has telegraphed to his Government account of interview, in which Sir F. Bertie agrees. As they request instructions, please telegraph views of Russian Government.

[44060]

No. 421.

*Foreign Office to Messrs. Dixon and Co.*

Gentlemen,

*Foreign Office, December 24, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 16th instant respecting the situation in Persia and the present position of British trade in that country.

In reply, I am to inform you that Sir E. Grey is aware of the state of insecurity on the roads there, and that His Majesty's Minister at Tehran is giving his attention to the

subject. It is to be feared, however, that it would not be practicable to propose to the Persian Government any such measure as is suggested in your letter.

I am, &amp;c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[45028]

No. 422.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 25.)*

(No. 311.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 25, 1908.*

YESTERDAY the Special Envoy from the Shah paid me a visit. M. Isvolsky, he said, had spoken to him severely—which is satisfactory. The Envoy maintained that Persia was not sufficiently matured for constitutional government, and dwelt at length on the necessity of first reforming the Administration before convoking an Assembly. He instanced Egypt and India as countries in which we had introduced admirable government without giving them a Constitution on modern lines. The Envoy struck me as a man of no calibre, but he evidently does not wish to go back empty handed. He told me that he would visit other European capitals, and said that money was the most pressing necessity for his country, so I dare say he will seek financial aid from Germany, as Sir G. Barclay intimates.

I have asked for an interview with M. Isvolsky to-morrow, when I will speak to him about the Zil-es-Sultan and about other matters connected with Persia. His Excellency is to make his statement in the Duma to-day, and is therefore invisible.

[45020]

No. 423.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 25.)*

(No. 451.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 25, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution.

The Grand Vizier, whom the two dragomans visited yesterday in order to remonstrate with him for having failed to furnish the written undertaking he had promised them, showed himself unexpectedly stubborn, and used all the old arguments about the laws of Islam being opposed to election by the people. At a moment when the Shah seemed on the point of yielding to our representations I cannot account for this change of attitude on the part of the Grand Vizier.

The refugees at the Austrian Legation have left, but there are still 250 at the Turkish Embassy, and they decline to leave, though I informed the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires on Wednesday of the Shah's assurances.

[45030]

No. 424.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 26.)*

(No. 313.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 26, 1908.*

RETURN of Zil-es-Sultan to Persia.

I saw M. Isvolsky to-day, and asked his Excellency what his views were as to the Zil returning to Persia in the present state of affairs. We had some conversation on the subject, and then M. Isvolsky proposed that a message should be sent to the Zil to the effect that the British and Russian Governments would prefer that he should remain in Europe until, at any rate, a more normal and stable state of affairs had been established in Persia. A telegram in this sense is being sent to the Russian Ambassador in Paris, and M. Isvolsky expressed a hope that you would agree to instruct Sir F. Bertie in a similar sense. It seems that the Zil-es-Sultan has said that he will act in accordance with whatever wishes may be expressed by the two Governments.



[45021]

No. 425.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 26.)*

(No. 452.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 26, 1908.*

THE Shah and Constitution. Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 309 repeated to me in your telegram No. 364 of the 24th December.

The effect on the Shah of our holding out the hope of an advance (see my telegram No. 440 of the 14th instant) has been only momentary, and I do not think that we properly can go further on these lines.

I cannot but feel some anxiety in regard to the situation. I understand that the people may close the bazaars at any moment, and this would give the Shah a pretext for using repressive measures.

I consider that the moment has now come for representations of a more cogent character, as the result of our pressing advice has so far been practically nil. I would suggest that the two Representatives might demand an audience of the Shah and point out to His Majesty that the only way of calming the present agitation is to dismiss the Grand Vizier and the Minister of War from his Councils, promptly to intrust to competent persons the framing of the electoral law which he has promised to his people and to the two Representatives, and to grant an amnesty to those of his subjects who are under arms in the Province of Azerbaijan, and that if these measures are not taken the two Governments will infer that His Majesty refuses definitely to follow their advice, and will leave him to settle matters with his people without further giving him advice and sympathy.

I propose this representation, always assuming that the two Governments are not prepared to adopt the course mentioned in my telegram No. 394 of the 23rd ultimo.

It would, I think, be desirable to intimate clearly to the Shah at the same time that, should disorders break out in Tehran, the Russian officers of the Cossack Brigade will be instructed that they themselves should participate in no measures except for the protection of life and property, and that their men will only be used for such protection.

If such a representation failed, though I believe it would in fact bring the Shah to reason, it would give the two Governments an opportunity, should they desire it, of escaping with a good face from the responsibility of prescribing, as the best cure for the ills of Persia, a constitutional régime.

This responsibility, involved by our representations of the last few months, will become a very embarrassing one in the event of far-reaching demands from the Nationalists. I am given to understand that they are likely in the near future to formulate a demand for the restoration of the late constitutional régime without modification.

M. Sabline does not know of this suggestion. I have not mentioned it to him.

[45022]

No. 426.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 26.)*

(No. 453.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 26, 1908.*

SITUATION in Azerbaijan.

Mr. Wratislaw reports that the Nationalists have been worsted in some skirmishes which have taken place during the last few days in the direction of Maraga.

A declaration, alleged to have been made by the Turkish Commander on the frontier near Urumia, to the effect that the Turks are prepared to support the National party in Azerbaijan, has been brought to Tabreez, and communicated to Satar Khan by an individual from Urumia.

Mr. Wratislaw cannot vouch for the authenticity of the declaration, and the bearer has a bad reputation.

[45023]

No. 427.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 26.)*

(No. 454.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 26, 1908.*

SEIZURE of Imperial Bank's property by Ain-ed-Dowleh. My telegram No. 443 of the 19th instant.

Although I had the promise of the Persian Government that the money seized would be refunded on or before the 24th instant, they have failed to do so. According to the Grand Vizier, the money will be paid on the 28th instant, but I fail to see where they will find the requisite sum of money.

In the event of the Persian Government again failing to make good their promise, I propose to demand the attachment of Ain-ed-Dowleh's house in Tehran, if the Manager of the Imperial Bank concurs in this course.

[44888]

No. 428.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 675.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 26, 1908.*

PROTECTION of Shah (see Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 447 of the 23rd instant).

In my opinion the guarantee should follow the lines of the formula suggested by His Majesty's Minister at Tehran in his telegram No. 446 of the 22nd instant and should not be put in writing, as, if this were done, it might be regarded as an act of intervention and would also be liable to abuse by the Shah.

The guarantee that we gave this time last year did not include the Shah's family, but if the Russian Government are anxious that the family should be included we might concede the point.

[45047]

No. 429.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 27.)*

(No. 316.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 27, 1908.*

PERSIA.

I communicated to M. Isvolsky the draft of a telegram to you giving the substance of the views which his Excellency expressed to me in a long conversation which I had with him yesterday in regard to the situation in Persia. M. Isvolsky tells me that the general sense of his remarks is recorded accurately in my draft, but begs me to wait for a few days when he promises me a more precise and detailed exposition of the proposals that he has to make.

I am replying that I will hold back the telegram, but am adding that I hope that he will enable me to lay his views before you with as little delay as possible, as Sir G. Barclay considers that the situation in Tehran is becoming less satisfactory than it was.

[45025]

No. 430.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 27.)*

(No. 456.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 27, 1908.*

I LEARN from the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires that the Nationalists at Resht have taken refuge in the Turkish Consular Agency at that place.



[45346]

No. 431.

*Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)*

(No. 117.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Paris, December 28, 1908.

PLEASE refer to my telegram No. 114 of the 22nd instant relative to the Zil-es-Sultan.

I received a letter from the Russian Ambassador on the 25th instant, stating that M. Isvolsky was communicating with you with a view to arranging for the reply to be given to the Zil-es-Sultan, and that the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs considered it desirable that the Prince should not leave Paris until a decision had been reached by the two Governments. M. de Nélidow added that as time pressed he had requested the Persian Minister in Paris to beg the Prince not to leave Paris in the mean time. On receipt of this letter I went to see M. de Nélidow and explained to him that some delay might occur before I received instructions on account of the Christmas holidays, and I said that as his Excellency's communication to the Prince would no doubt prevent his leaving Paris, I need not take any action.

I am telegraphing to you *en clair* (see my telegram No. 118 of to-day) the text of the replies received by the Zil-es-Sultan to the report which he sent to Tehran of his interview with the Russian Ambassador and myself. These replies have been shown to me by the Persian Minister, who feels that he is placed in an awkward position by being made use of by the Prince as interpreter and intermediary, and he therefore begs that no mention may be made of his name at Tehran in connection with the Zil-es-Sultan. He tells me that he never knows whether the instructions he receives one day will not be contradicted the next, and he says it is unlikely that the Prince, in view of the withdrawal of the British and Russian guarantees in the event of his return to Persia, will go back unless suitable guarantees be received by him from the Shah. These he considers will probably not be forthcoming.

[45347]

No. 432.

*Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)*

(No. 118.)

(Telegraphic.) *En clair.*

Paris, December 28, 1908.

ZIL-ES-SULTAN sends me word that he telegraphed to Shah full account of what passed at interview with Russian Ambassador and myself, as reported in my telegram No. 113 of the 22nd instant.

Zil-es-Sultan has communicated to me gist of telegrams from Shah and Grand Vizier transmitted to him through Persian Legation here, dated the 25th instant, in which he is invited to return without delay, together with his son. His Imperial Highness has also received telegrams from his brother Naib-os-Saltaneh and Minister of War urging his return as soon as possible.

[45312]

No. 433.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)*

(No. 457.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, December 28, 1908.

BUSHIRE customs. My telegram No. 428 of the 11th instant.

I have received the reply of the Persian Government to my representations. It is to the effect that from December to March next the Customs Administration will pay 13,000 tomans a-month and thereafter 30,000 tomans a-month. The 13,000 tomans are the monthly interest on the advance of 1901. It is not precisely stated in the note that either sum is secured on the customs receipts of Bushire, nor is it clear whether the 30,000 tomans a-month is for the sinking fund and interest on the 1901 advance or for interest on all the bank's advances.

May I accept this arrangement if I can obtain an express undertaking from the Persian Government that the payments are to be made from the Bushire receipts, and get them to recognize the 30,000 tomans as a payment for interest only?

Please refer to the Imperial Bank for any explanations you may desire.

[45341]

No. 434.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)*

(No. 458.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, December 28, 1908.

SITUATION in Tehran.

As a demonstration by the Nationalist party the bazaars have been closed to-day. The town remains quiet.

[45030]

No. 435.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.*

(No. 307.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, December 28, 1908.

ZIL-ES-SULTAN.

M. Isvolsky's proposal has my concurrence, and you may act accordingly. (See Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 313 of the 26th instant.)

[45414]

No. 436.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.*

(No. 488.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, December 28, 1908.

BAST at Turkish Embassy in Tehran.

His Majesty's Government have received a communication from the Russian Government asking that you should be instructed to join your Russian colleague in pointing out to the Grand Vizier that the giving of political bast at Tehran is very undesirable, and in proposing that, provided their safety is guaranteed, the bastis be compelled to leave the Turkish Embassy.

In 1906 some 15,000 persons took bast in the British Legation, and, in order to avoid a recurrence of a similar abuse of the custom, His Majesty's Government have pursued a similar line of action, believing it to be the only course by which interference in the domestic concerns of Persia may be avoided.

In making any representations you should give assurances, and induce M. Zinoview to do so too, that no Russian or British Agents will interfere to the detriment of Persian Nationalists at Tehran, provided that political bast is not allowed by the Turkish Government. In view of the present state of feeling of the Turkish Parliament, you should use your discretion as to how far pressure can be put upon the Grand Vizier in this matter.

[45021]

No. 437.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 368.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, December 28, 1908.

PERSIA.

Please refer to your telegram No. 452 of the 26th December, 1908.

His Majesty's Government are of opinion that it would be well to wait till the views of M. Isvolsky are known to them before taking further action. His Excellency has promised to make proposals of a definite nature to Sir A. Nicolson within a few days.

[45443]

No. 438.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 29.)*

(No. 459.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, December 29, 1908.

SITUATION in Tehran.

The town remains quite quiet to-day, and some of the bazaars are open.



[43487]

No. 439.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.*

(No. 534.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 29, 1908.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 850 of the 9th instant, reporting a conversation which you recently had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs respecting the disturbed state of Persia, and especially of the Province of Azerbaijan.

The language of the second paragraph of your despatch is not quite clear, but it appears that your Excellency agreed with Tewfik Pasha in his opinion that it might be desirable to dispatch Turkish troops to Tabreez to co-operate with any Russian force sent to Persia in maintaining order and protecting Ottoman interests.

His Majesty's Government hope, however, that intervention by any Power will be avoided, and there is no reason to apprehend the dispatch of a Russian expedition if Russian lives and property are not assailed, and if the idea of all other foreign intervention is discouraged. It would be well therefore to deprecate on every opportunity the idea of Turkish intervention, and not to encourage the contemplation of it even hypothetically.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) E. GREY.

[45466]

No. 440.

*The Imperial Bank of Persia to Foreign Office.—(Received December 30.)*

Sir,

*25, Abchurch Lane, London, December 29, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 22nd instant, and my Directors note with satisfaction that the Grand Vizier has given his assurance that the sum of 25,000 tomans, seized by the Ain-ed-Dowleh from the bank's cash remittance to Tabreez, shall be repaid to the bank by Thursday (? to-day). The Board of Directors beg to tender their thanks to the Secretary of State for his action in the matter.

I am desired to mention that there is a further sum of 31,749 tomans, which was seized by the Ain-ed-Dowleh in October last, whilst in transit to Tabreez under escort, full particulars of which are known to His Britannic Majesty's Minister in Tehran.

As no satisfaction has so far been received in respect of this outrage, I venture to request His Britannic Majesty's Government to intervene on the bank's behalf regarding this matter also. I beg to point out that this intervention is the more necessary in the present juncture, inasmuch as unless we obtain immediate satisfaction a vital branch of our business will become paralysed, for our insurance brokers inform us that they will be unable to effect further insurances on our specie caravans and postal remittances if the highest officials of the Persian Government are allowed to lay hands on them with impunity; and it is absolutely necessary for the conduct of exchange (which is the most profitable branch of the bank's business) to be able to move treasure from place to place; besides, with regard to our note issue, consignments of coin are indispensable from time to time.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) G. NEWELL,  
*Manager.*

[45502]

No. 441.

*Mr. D'Arcy to Foreign Office.—(Received December 30.)*

Sir,

*Stanmore Hall, Stanmore, December 28, 1908.*

IN reply to your letter of the 17th instant, I have now had an opportunity of consulting the chief among the parties interested with me in developing the Persian oil-fields. I regret the delay, but it was difficult to see some of them at this season of the year.

Before the Government comes to a decision adverse to the retention of the guard at its own cost and that of India, I would ask you to consider the following:—

We desire at once to admit that, as between the Government of His Imperial Majesty the Shah of Persia and the Governments of Great Britain and India, it is the duty of the first named, rather than of the latter, to furnish all the necessary guards at its own expense, as provided by the Concession granted to me by the Persian Government.

But it is matter of common knowledge that when we came into contact with the Bakhtiari people, and these stopped the works which under the Concession above referred to we had every right to pursue, the Government of His Imperial Majesty the Shah was, and is, absolutely incapable of enforcing its authority over the Bakhtiaris.

We therefore sent out an emissary, Mr. J. R. Preece, a British ex-Consul in Persia. The stoppage of our work, with a large number of Europeans sitting idle in Persia, itself involved us in very heavy expense. In addition to this we paid the cost of Mr. Preece's mission, and, when he succeeded in making terms with the Chiefs on the spot of the Bakhtiari tribe, we paid, and are paying, blackmail to them for permission to do that which we submit we have a perfect right to do without let or interference, and, above all, we are bearing the very heavy loss caused by the stoppage of our work in the consequently delayed formation of the Company which it is our intention to form at an early date to develop the petroleum industry in Persia.

For obvious reasons there was nothing to be gained by our attempting to formulate a claim on the Persian Government; still less, of course, can there be any claim on the British Government in respect of the above items.

But we trust that the latter will take into consideration, before coming to a decision on the question of the sepoy guard now at issue, that we have suffered and are bearing these heavy expenses and loss—we who are endeavouring to develop and have already met with marked success in laying the foundation of this new industry, an industry to be worked entirely by British initiative, in British hands, and by British capital, and one which we have every reason to believe should be looked upon with favour, if not indulgence, by the British Government, since it may in the near future become a source of valuable fuel for our navy.

We would therefore earnestly beg of His Majesty's Government to maintain at the public cost this guard, whose necessity and presence has been justified hitherto by events, and whose retention on public grounds, as you are good enough to inform us in your letter now under reply, is advocated both by Captain Lorimer and Lieutenant Wilson.

We also beg leave to point out with the greatest respect that if any catastrophe or violence on the part of the tribesmen should result as a consequence of the withdrawal of the guard it might lead to a very much more serious national expenditure and to serious action on the part of the Government, for after all we are British subjects not only pursuing lawful objects in Persia, but doing so with the express sanction of the Persian Government.

Finally, it has been suggested to us that if the Government is unwilling to use the relatively small amount of public funds required by the retention of the guard protecting important British interests, a protection rendered necessary by the physical inability of the Government of His Imperial Majesty the Shah to carry out its obligations in this connection, the Government might not unreasonably instruct its Representative in Tehran to request that the cost of the guard be reimbursed by the Persian Government.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) W. K. D'ARCY.

[45546]

No. 442.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 30.)*

(No. 460.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 30, 1908.*

MY immediately preceding telegram: Situation.

To-day all the bazaars are open.



[45023]

No. 443.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 371.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 30, 1908.*

SEIZURE of Imperial Bank's remittances by Ain-ed-Dowleh. (See your telegram No. 454 of the 19th instant.) Your intervention is requested by the bank for the recovery of a further sum of 31,749 tomans seized in October by Ain-ed-Dowleh.

You should make energetic representations to the Persian Government on the subject. The bank complains that brokers will no longer insure specie caravans if high officials are allowed to plunder them with impunity, and that they will thus lose one of the most profitable branches of their business.

[45312]

No. 444.

*Foreign Office to Sir T. Jackson.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 30, 1908.*

WITH reference to previous correspondence respecting the transfer of the lien of your bank from the customs of Kermanshah to those of Bushire, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to inform you that a telegram, dated the 28th instant, has been received from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran to the following effect:—

"The Persian Government state that from December to March 1909 the Customs Administration will pay 13,000 tomans per month, and 30,000 tomans per month thereafter."

Thirteen thousand tomans is, Sir G. Barclay believes, the monthly interest on the advance of 1901. He is not sure whether the Persian Government intend the sum of 30,000 tomans for interest on all the advances on your bank, or for the sinking fund and interest on your advance of 1901; nor is he certain that either of the two sums specified is secured on the customs of Bushire.

Sir G. Barclay will endeavour to obtain an express undertaking that the payments are to be made from the customs of Bushire, and to get 30,000 tomans recognized as a payment for interest only; and he inquires whether the arrangement may be accepted if he obtains satisfaction on both points, or upon the first-named only.

I am to request that you will favour this Department with the views of your Board on the subject.

I am to add that Sir E. Grey understands that the yearly interest on the total debt of the Persian Government to your bank is, at 12 per cent., about 300,000 tomans; if, therefore, a sum of 30,000 tomans a-month can be secured, the claims of the bank would presumably be satisfied.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[45023]

No. 445.

*Foreign Office to Imperial Bank of Persia.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 30, 1908.*

WITH reference to my letter of the 22nd instant, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to inform you that a telegram dated the 26th instant has been received from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran respecting the sequestration by the Ain-ed-Dowleh of a sum of 25,000 tomans while in transit to your branch at Tabreez.

Sir G. Barclay reports that the money has not yet been refunded, although the Persian Government promised in writing to do so before the 24th instant. The Grand Vizier had subsequently promised payment on the 28th instant, but Sir G. Barclay did not feel confident as to where the money was to come from. In these circumstances he proposed, subject to the concurrence of your Manager in Tehran and if the Grand Vizier failed to fulfil his promise, to demand the attachment of the Ain-ed-Dowleh's house in Tehran.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) W. LANGLEY.

[45619]

No. 446.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 31.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 23rd instant, relative to the proposed appointment of Lieutenant Ranking to act as Consul at Ahwaz.

*India Office, December 30, 1908.*

Inclosure in No. 446.

*Viscount Morley to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*India Office, December 23, 1908.*

PLEASE refer to my telegram of the 20th July last as to Lieutenant Ranking's appointment at Ahwaz.

Foreign Office have been informed of Lorimer's application for two years' leave, commencing on the 15th proximo. Do you propose that Ranking should act for him? if so, what are your proposals as to his pay and allowance? While thus acting, would he be relieved entirely from his duties with the oil guard? and, if so relieved, would it be necessary to replace him by another military officer on the salary which you recommended for Ranking in your letter of the 8th October last? If the guard returns to India, can you give the approximate amount of transport charges? An early reply by telegraph is requested. Retention of oil guard is now under consideration in consultation with the Treasury.

[45675]

No. 447.

*The Imperial Bank of Persia to Foreign Office.—(Received December 31.)*

Sir,

*25, Abchurch Lane, London, December 30, 1908.*

WITH reference to the arrangement with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for establishing a branch of the bank at Nasratabad, in Seistan, and in continuation of my letter dated the 2nd January last, I have the honour to forward herewith a statement of account for the financial year ended the 20th September last which I trust will be found correct.

The result of the working of the Nasratabad branch for the year ended the 20th September last, after deducting the subsidy of 1,500l., shows a profit of 287l. 9s. 5d., which, deducted from 2,790l. 10s. 3d., the balance brought forward from last account, and interest, 139l. 11s., makes a loss for the five years of 2,642l. 11s. 10d.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) G. NEWELL,  
Manager.

[1622]

3 U



## Inclosure in No. 447.

*Statement of Accounts respecting Nasratabad Office of the Imperial Bank of Persia for the Year ending September 20, 1908.*

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Memorandum of working expenses:—						
Salaries .. .. .	927	7	11			
Travelling expenses .. .. .	63	0	9			
Petty repairs .. .. .	17	11	10			
Telegrams and postages .. .. .	55	0	10			
Furniture and stationery (written off) .. .. .	110	3	6			
Uniforms .. .. .	2	17	11			
Fire, light, &c. .. .. .	74	14	3			
Proportion of bank premises building account (written off) .. .. .	251	13	5			
Five per cent. interest for twelve months on 10,000 <i>l.</i> —the capital allotted to the branch .. .. .	500	0	0			
Five per cent. interest for twelve months on 75,000 krans—cost of 1,500 zars of land for building premises, 3,750 krans, at 56 .. .. .	66	19	3			
				2,069	9	8
Less balance of interest, commission, &c. .. .. .				856	19	1
				1,212	10	7
Subsidy payable by the Indian Government .. .. .				1,500	0	0
Result of working for the year ending 20th September, 1908 .. .. .				287	9	5
Balance of loss brought forward from last account .. .. .	2,790	10	3			
Interest at 5 per cent. per annum for one year .. .. .	139	11	0			
				2,930	1	3
Loss on working to date .. .. .				2,642	11	10

N.B.—There is, in addition to the above, the adjustment in exchange on the capital of 10,000*l.*, to be arranged with the Indian Government on termination of the Agreement.

(Signed) G. NEWELL,  
Manager.

London, December 30, 1908.

[1]

No. 448.

*Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 31.)*

(No. 429.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, December 31, 1908.

WHILE he does not favour an identic representation to the Grand Vizier very warmly, my Russian colleague is distinctly not disposed to include a reference to the assurance proposed in the last sentence of your telegram No. 488 of the 28th instant.

I am informed by the Sublime Porte, in reply to some observations made by me, that the bastis whose lives have been guaranteed are gradually evacuating the Ottoman Embassy, but instructions have been sent to the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires to let them know that the pretension advanced by them of making the grant of the Constitution a condition for their departure cannot be admitted by the Ottoman Government.

[2]

No. 449.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 31.)*

(No. 461.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, December 31, 1908.

IMPERIAL Bank of Persia and the Bushire customs. My telegram No. 457 of the 28th instant.

It is intended that the monthly instalment from March onwards of 30,000 tomans shall constitute a payment in respect of interest on the entire debt. I recommend that the arrangement should be accepted in the event of our being able to secure the express assignment of the Bushire customs from that date. Manager shares my view that, in the circumstances, it would be the best solution possible.

No. 450.

[3]

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 31.)*

(No. 462.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, December 31, 1908.

AIN-ED-DOWLEH'S seizure of bank's money.

Your telegram No. 371 of yesterday.

With the concurrence of Bank Manager, I demanded a bond recognizing the 31,000 tomans as a Government debt, my energetic representations having failed to obtain their restitution. I understood that this arrangement had the Board's approval. I expect the bond daily. It will, I fear, be necessary for the bank to regard this as an augmentation of the Government's debt, as the latter have no funds.

Mr. Consul-General Wratislaw gives me to understand that at least a part of the later seizure of the 25,000 tomans will be disgorged by Ain-ed-Dowleh.